

# LABOR AND EMPIRE

A Study of the Reaction of British Labor, Mainly as  
Represented in Parliament, to British  
Imperialism Since 1880

BY

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## PREFACE

THIS study arose from a desire to answer the question, What has the rising political factor in Great Britain, namely, British labor, done during the last forty years about British imperialism? The question may be formulated in another way; one may ask, Can countries like India, Mexico, and China, the direct victims of modern imperialism, expect better treatment from the political left than from the political right of the several powers?

Imperialism is not a new phenomenon. Every historical age has had one or more countries swayed by the ideal of imperial rule over alien lands and peoples. Nor is it peculiar to any particular form of government. Autocracy, oligarchy, as well as democracy, have all made attempts at empire-building. Even if we qualify "imperialism" with the word "economic," we cannot claim it as especially ours. The stimuli and the fruits of empire-building have always been predominantly economic.

"Economic" is too broad a term to carry any definite characterization. To be exact, the imperialism of the last forty years should be called, not economic imperialism but manufacturer-investor imperialism. This is so, not because modern imperialists are a class apart, but because modern economic life has changed.

The change in economic life, which has given the imperialism of our day its characteristic features, has introduced another significant change in the political life of the western countries. It has created a new class of people who, though politically enfranchised, still earn their living through



wages, that is, people who work with tools and materials owned by other people. In Great Britain, this class was born long before 1880. It passed from 1880 to the present time its adolescence and is to-day facing its manhood. The assumption is made that what the adolescent did is an indication of what the man will do.

It is because of the rise of the fourth estate and secondarily because of the new feature of imperialism that the writer's question has meaning. Otherwise, the previous history of mankind would have furnished a conclusive answer.

If the desire to know something definite about something definite can be called a hypothesis, this study may be credited with one. If, however, by hypothesis is meant a tentative theory awaiting verification, this study cannot claim to start on such mature grounds.

It is impossible to acknowledge with adequacy the debt the writer owes to various authors and teachers. He should, at least, mention: Professor Franklin H. Giddings, who pointed out to him in a series of lectures the factor of class and regional struggle in history; Professor W. R. Shepherd, who kindly read the manuscript and gave many valuable suggestions; and, above all, Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes, who has not only given to the writer advice and inspiration but removed some of the obvious crudities of the writer's language. Although these eminent teachers, like others, may be only embarrassed by such acknowledgments, it is the writer's pleasure to express to them his gratitude. The embarrassment may be partly removed by stating that the writer is alone responsible for the statements, both of fact and of judgment, in the book.

T. F. TSLANG.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### *a. Background*

THE year 1880 marked no decisive change in the imperial and foreign policies of Great Britain. The government of Gladstone, which replaced that of Disraeli, stopped the war in Afghanistan but achieved the war's purpose by subsidizing the Amir. Gladstone also restored the autonomy of Transvaal, only after an armed conflict. He began the occupation of Egypt. In 1885, he prepared for war with Russia. The question is not here raised as to the sincerity of his Midlothian campaign. What these acts indicate is that events forced him to mark his ministry with war and expansion as they had forced his predecessors and as they were to force his successors. It would be truer to say that in imperial and foreign affairs Great Britain has preserved continuity of policy. Before Lord Salisbury and his Unionist associates was Disraeli; before Disraeli was Palmerston. While Cobden and Bright preached free trade, disarmament, non-intervention, and arbitration, Palmerston, as a member of Liberal ministries, carried on or promoted wars in China and Crimea, coerced Greece, and interfered in the internal affairs of Spain and Portugal. In the words of his biographer: "He wished to make and to keep England at the head of the world, and to cherish in the minds of others that she was so."<sup>1</sup> Palmerston's days in

<sup>1</sup> Lytton Bulwer, *Life of Palmerston*, quoted by W. L. Blease, *A Short History of English Liberalism* (New York, 1913), p. 209.

British politics began at the time of the first Reform Bill and only ended with his death in 1865. To go beyond Palmerston would be to re-tell the history of England's Second Hundred Years' War with France.

There are, however, certain characteristics of British imperialism during the past forty years, which, though not constituting a break in British tradition, make the period a convenient division for study. In the first place, the imperialist projects of the period were carried out with the greatest energy and speed. At the beginning of the period, British colonial possessions had a total area of 7,647,000 square miles; by 1920, they had reached the enormous total of 12,664,000 square miles, not counting the million square miles of mandated territory gained through the World War.

Secondly, the period was one of world imperialism, in that it was participated in by practically all of the world powers and also in that the stakes of diplomacy were spread everywhere in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Ocean. As Masterman has put it: "The Congress of Berlin may be said to close the chapter of European history that opened with the Congress of Vienna. Henceforth the relations of the powers were affected less by internal European questions than by the world-wide struggle for colonies and markets. It was not on the Rhine and the Danube but in Tunis, Egypt, Nigeria, Manchuria, that the chancelleries of Europe now found the center of gravity of their diplomacy."<sup>1</sup> Certain internal European questions did persist to disturb the relations between state and state but even these were powerfully influenced by repercussions of the extra-European struggle.

Thirdly, this new imperialism was less bent on seizing

<sup>1</sup>G. P. Gooch and J. H. B. Masterman, *A Century of British Diplomacy* (London, 1917), p. 31.

territory for colonization than on securing sources of raw materials, profitable markets for the surplus manufactured products of the home country, and preferential fields of investment. Public loans to poor governments and railway and mining concessions in undeveloped countries were prominent among the objects on which the Foreign Office, the navy, and private business interests co-operated. Take the item of investments abroad:<sup>1</sup> in 1900, the United Kingdom invested £26,069,000 in foreign countries and £100,121,000 at home; in 1913, foreign investments had increased to £149,735,000 while domestic investments had decreased to £35,951,000.

Finally, the sentiment of Little-Englandism was, during the period, almost completely eclipsed by the sentiment of Greater Britainism. Foremost in time and in lasting influence to bring about this change were the lectures of Professor Seeley, published in the volume, *The Expansion of England*, in which he sought to show the unreality of the idea that colonies must in course of time sever their ties with the mother country and taught with eloquence the historical destiny of the Empire and the modern necessity for it. Marriott calls *The Expansion of England*, which came before the general public of England in 1883, the most powerful political book since the appearance of the *Wealth of Nations*. James Anthony Froude and Sir Charles Dilke, after extensive voyages through the Empire, wrote books in which they sketched their visions of the imperial destiny. Public men like Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Rosebery; organizations like the Imperial Federation League, the Imperial Defence Committee, and the Royal Colonial Institute, all contributed to the growth of Greater Britainism. Browning, in his "Home-Thoughts, from the

<sup>1</sup> C. K. Hobson, *The Export of Capital* (London, 1914), p. 159.

Sea," recalled the exploits of another generation around the Cape of St. Vincent and Cadiz Bay. Henry Newbolt celebrated the great admirals of England, who

"... left us a kingdom none can take,  
The realm of the circling sea,  
To be ruled by the rightful sons of Blake,  
And the 'Rodneys to be."

The poetry of Rudyard Kipling, for all its insistence on the moral responsibility of the Saxon for the "lesser breeds," reflects clearly this change in sentiment. It has been observed<sup>1</sup> that British poetry, in so far as it took note of politics, underwent a decisive change in the later seventies of the last century: in the earlier Victorian era, patriotic poetry reflected the Englishman's pride in his island home and the free institutions of a self-governing people; after the 'seventies, it was infused with the pride of empire.

Enough has probably been said to indicate the reality and the intensity of the imperialist movement in Great Britain since 1880. Details of this history do not belong here; in so far as they are necessary to elucidate matters, they will be given in the various subsequent chapters. The general outline of the movement can be briefly sketched.

In Africa, three lines of imperial advance were pursued: one from the Cape, a second from Egypt, and a third from the eastern coast, all converging on the central lakes. In India, there was the forward movement towards Burmah on the east and Afghanistan and Persia on the northwest; as a part of this policy, points on the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Aden were secured. In China, Great Britain took Wei-hai-wei and Kowloon and obtained for a time a sphere of influence in the Yangtse Valley. In the Pacific Ocean, she annexed a great number of islands.

<sup>1</sup>J. A. R. Marriott, "Imperial Note in Victorian Poetry," *Nineteenth Century*, vol. 48, pp. 236-248.

Questions of the political rights of the native populations in Ireland, in India, and in Egypt were agitated throughout the period.

To knit the Empire closer together, schemes of imperial preference, imperial federation, and imperial defence were advanced by various groups.

In the twentieth century, Great Britain forsook her diplomatic isolation and formed an alliance with Japan and ententes with France and Russia. She maintained the two-power standard for the navy, changed later into the standard of sixty per cent. superiority over the German navy. She re-organized her army.

Finally, we have the chapter of the World War and its resultant treaties of peace.

Parallel to the imperialist movement, there has run the labor movement. For the latter, as for the former, the year 1880 marked no decisive change but was followed by forty years of growth in numbers, in influence, and in radicalism. The Trades Union Congress may be taken as an index: in 1880, the Congress was attended by 122 delegates, representing 494,205 trade union members; in 1920, it was attended by 955 delegates, representing 6,505,482 members. In 1892, the first year for which trade-union statistics are comparatively complete, the total membership of trade unions in Great Britain, both those affiliated with the Congress and those not affiliated, has been computed by Sidney Webb to be a little over one million and a half; in 1920, the aggregate trade-union membership reached seven million. According to Webb, the trade-union membership represented twenty per cent. of the adult male working population in 1892 and sixty per cent. in 1920.

The movement for labor representation<sup>1</sup> in the House

<sup>1</sup> Sidney Webb, *History of Trade Unionism* (London and New York, 1920), chap. xi.



of Commons was initiated with the limited aim of returning a number of working-man representatives to Parliament. In 1869, one year after the Trades Union Congress had been started, a number of trade union leaders formed the Labor Representation League without any official relationship to the Congress. The League was active in the general elections of 1874 and 1880 but became extinct around 1881. Five years later, the Congress appointed a Labor Electoral Committee to promote the object to which the League had devoted itself. Not meeting with adequate support, the Committee died in 1893. Neither the League nor the Committee aspired to form an independent national party with a distinct program covering all points of national policy; they and the representatives they had helped to elect to the House of Commons attempted only to influence legislation affecting trade union objects, besides which the labor members of the House were free to go with any party. The first attempt to form such an independent labor party was made by Keir Hardie who, with a few of the delegates to the 1892 Trades Union Congress, organized the Independent Labor Party. The Party, however, met with total failure at the general election of 1895, not one of its twenty-eight candidates being returned.

Propaganda by the Hardie group continued. It bore fruit in the resolution passed by the 1899 Congress, directing the Parliamentary Committee to convene a conference of trade unions, co-operative societies, and socialist organizations, with the object of increasing labor representation in the House of Commons. The result was the birth of the Labor Representation Committee, with four members representing the Trades Union Congress and two members each representing the Independent Labor Party, the Fabian Society, and the Social Democratic Federation. The constitution of the Committee, it will be observed, was on a

federal basis; affiliation was open only to the organizations, not to individuals. In 1906, after the general election, the members who were returned to Parliament under the auspices of the Committee formed a distinct party, with its own officers and its own parliamentary program; the Committee itself changed its name to the Labor Party. In 1910, the large number of parliamentary members whom the miners' organizations had helped to elect acceded to the Party. The scope of the Party was further enlarged in 1917 when it permitted affiliation by individual workers by brain or hand.

The growth of the movement since 1900 has been remarkable. In that year, its affiliated members numbered 353,070 trade unionists and 22,861 socialists; in 1920, the membership had increased to 4,215,404 trade unionists and 41,270 socialists

As this study will concern itself largely with the record of the laborites in the House of Commons, it will be well to tabulate here their number in each parliament: <sup>1</sup>

1880-1885: 3	1900-1905: 15
1885 : 11	1906-1910: 54
1886-1892: 10	1910 : 40
1892-1894: 16	1911-1918: 49
1895-1900: 14	1919-1921: 70

If we should set aside for the moment the Parliament of 1880-1885, the remaining figures divide themselves into three groups. From 1885 to 1905, the number of labor members ranged between ten and sixteen. The year 1906 witnessed an increase of more than threefold; the Labor Party alone returned twenty-nine candidates, later increased to thirty-one through bye-elections; other labor members

<sup>1</sup> These figures include all labor members, both those elected under the auspices of the Labor Party and those elected under other auspices. For each period they represent the maximum, those elected at the bye-elections being enumerated as if elected at the general election.

brought the total to fifty-four. From 1906 to 1918, the number remained around fifty. The general election of 1918 resulted in a compact Parliamentary Labor Party of sixty-three, increased to seventy by 1921. By virtue of the fact that its number was second only to that of the party of the government, it became after 1918 His Majesty's Opposition.

The increase in influence of the labor movement in Great Britain during the past forty years may best be given in the words of Sidney Webb:

We may, in fact, not unfairly say that Trade Unionism has, in 1920, won its recognition by Parliament and the government, by law and custom, as a separate element in the community, entitled to distinct recognition as part of the social machinery of the State, its members being thus allowed to give—like the clergy in Convocation—not only their votes as citizens, but also their concurrence as an order or estate.<sup>1</sup>

And Webb adds that in 1920 labor in Great Britain was but at the beginning of a new chapter.

As an integral part of the Labor Party's advance in numbers and in influence has been the growth in radicalism. To this various factors have contributed. Individual propagandists like Henry George and H. M. Hyndman; organizations like the Fabian Society (founded 1884) and the Social Democratic Federation (founded 1886); social and industrial conditions like unemployment and the Dock Laborers Strike in the late 'eighties; the rise of new leaders, all combined to bring about the new trade unionism. The earlier interest in factory laws and in the legal position of trade unions persisted; in addition to them came demands, first, for nationalization of land and social legislation as contrasted with factory legislation, and, later, for nation-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 635.

alization of all essential national resources and industries and labor participation in the control of industry.

*b. Aim and Scope*

The question then arises, Has this growing labor movement affected in any way the imperialist movement? If we conceive the former as the class struggle and the latter as the struggle between nations, we may ask, Has the class struggle interfered with the international struggle?

The question has been raised before and various answers have been given to it. "In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end." Thus Karl Marx in his *Communist Manifesto*. Even if we attribute the mathematical rigidity of this statement to propagandist fervor, there can be no doubt that Marx looked to the success of the proletarian cause for the solution of both the social and the international problem. The relation between the cause of British labor and the cause of Irish nationalism may serve as an example. "He (Marx) believed with all the integrity of which he was capable that the English working class would never be able to free itself until the Irish question was settled. Therefore he urged that the English workers should make common cause with the Irish in their struggle, and that they should take the initiative in denouncing the union of 1800 and demanding that it should be replaced by a free federation. 'The first thing to be done for emancipation here is to strike down the English oligarchy of landlords, and the fort here can never be stormed as long as there are strong outposts in Ireland.'"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Spargo, *Karl Marx, His Life and Work* (New York, 1912), p. 242.

Marx also indicated a procedure for attaining simultaneously social and international freedom and justice. In the Address to Working Classes issued on September 28, 1864, he told the wage earners that it was their duty "to master the mysteries of international politics, to watch the diplomatic acts of their respective governments, to counteract them, if necessary, by all means in their power, and when unable to prevent, to assemble in simultaneous demonstrations and to vindicate the simple laws of morality and of justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals as well as the intercourse of nations. To fight for such a foreign policy forms a part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working classes."

Karl Kautsky<sup>1</sup> believes, with Marx, in the internationalism of the working class. According to him, capitalist society is involved in a hopeless dilemma. As international commerce develops, international peace becomes more and more necessary, but at the same time international competition becomes keener and the dangers of conflict between nations become greater. The worker, however, having no landed property, has no country. He is a nomad, frequently an international nomad. As a nomad in a foreign country, he forgets his own, because he does not need its protection in his pursuit. Merchants may also go to foreign countries, but they do not forget their own country, for they need the protection of the national government. The competition between working men of different standards of living is, to Kautsky, not serious so far as international peace is concerned; for this obstacle cannot be removed by war but only by helping those of a lower standard of living to raise it.

This extreme thesis that the workman has no country

<sup>1</sup>Karl Kautsky, *Le Programme socialiste* (traduction L. Remy), pp. 226-233.

has not been accepted by all socialists. Jean Jaurès<sup>1</sup> thought it essentially unreal. One loves the "patrie" though having no land in it. Workers have always taken an interest in democracy; and the history of Europe shows that democracy and nationality are inseparable. Peoples, duped by their rulers, have at times failed to receive the equivalent in liberty, in democracy, of the national effort that they have made, as in the case of Germany after 1815, and even after 1866 and 1870. But they have not been entirely frustrated in their hopes. "Il y a toujours eu une part de victoire démocratique dans la victoire nationale." Defence of the country is a civic duty; socialists should only prevent their own country from committing an aggression.

Jaurès would have the workers defend not only the soil of the country but its economic interests abroad also. Speaking before the Bordeaux Congress of 1903, he declared, "... when conventions like the Brussels Sugar Convention intervene to regulate international economics, we see to it that France is not tricked; we think it the duty of our diplomacy, without violence or colonial exactions, to insist, so far as France's productivity entitles her to insist, that a share in distant markets, in China or elsewhere, be assured to the pacific penetration of our industry, which is a necessary condition for plentiful wages for the proletarian class."<sup>2</sup>

These views of Jaurès are similar to those of Bernstein. To the latter, Germany was the "vessel of a certain culture, which some of her military rivals (*e. g.* the Slavs) do really threaten," and it would be folly to neglect national defence.

While there is considerable ambiguity in all these theories, it is clear that Marx and Kautsky thought that working men ought not to be, and would become gradually less

<sup>1</sup> Jean Jaurès, *l'Armée nouvelle* (édition l'Humanité), pp 439, *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> R. C. K. Ensor, *Modern Socialism* (New York, 1904), p. 172.

and less, patriotic, while to Jaurès and Bernstein, patriotism, in the sense of being willing to defend the fatherland, ought to and would remain a part of the soul of the worker. None of them would support imperialism or aggressive nationalism, or thought that the workers should.

Outside of the ranks of socialism, other thinkers have written on the relation between the labor movement and the imperialist movement. F. von Bernhardi<sup>1</sup> finds in the differences in the standard of living in different parts of the world an insurmountable obstacle to labor internationalism, which ideal, according to him, could only be realized when the rate of wages and the hours of work are internationally regulated and when the cost of living is made uniform throughout the industrial world. John A. Hobson,<sup>2</sup> approaching the problem from a different angle, thinks that the social reforms demanded by labor, involving vast sums of money, will "take away from the 'imperialist' classes the surplus incomes which form the economic stimulus of imperialism." Thorstein Veblen<sup>3</sup> looks for a solution of the international problem in the changed habits of thought which the industrial revolution is effecting; he believes that constant working with machines will destroy the habits of personal loyalty and theoretical obscurantism which medieval industry and society produced and will substitute for them mechanistic habits of thought which are essentially inimical to imperialism and war.

All of these theories are concerned, not with the particular problem of British labor and British imperialism in

<sup>1</sup>F. von Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War* (New York, 1912), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism, a Study* (London, 1902), pp 95, 96, 148, 149.

<sup>3</sup>Thorstein Veblen, *An Inquiry into the Nature of Peace and the Terms of its Perpetuation* (New York, 1917), *passim*.

the last forty years, but with the general problem of the relation of the struggle between social classes to the struggle between regional, national groups. They represent the points of view whenever an attempt has been made to relate the two struggles. The present study is confined to the particular instance of Great Britain in the period since 1880. It will concern itself exclusively with the stand which British labor took on various concrete questions of imperialism as they came before the British people.

Having set forth the general aim of this study and its bearing on the general intellectual atmosphere of our day, it is desirable to define the scope with some degree of exactitude, particularly the two terms of "labor" and "empire."

1. What is labor? Not to mention the millions of unorganized laborers, it would be a physical impossibility to consult the individual trade unionists of Great Britain as to their opinions, if they had any, on, say, the Jameson Raid, the Morley-Minto reforms, the Bagdad Railway, or the naval budget of 1913. The nearest data of this kind would be the votes in the general elections of the period. Such data, however, more often than not mislead. No general election of the period was fought on one single issue. The record of votes does not distinguish between trade unionists and non-trade-unionists, working people and non-working people.

The study will, therefore, be confined to the opinion and action of the leaders of organized labor as expressed in the House of Commons, the Trades Union Congresses, and since 1901 the Labor Party Conferences. Because the House of Commons is in session for the greater part of the year and the other two bodies are in session for only a few days a year, and because of the difference in nature between the Commons on the one hand and the other bodies on the



other, the greater part of the material for this study will come from the parliamentary record. Practically, therefore, this study will be one largely of the Labor Party in Parliament.

This "Labor Party", as has been shown, did not assume officially the status of a party till 1906. Before that year, there was no parliamentary labor party; there were only working-man members of Parliament. After 1906 and before 1919, although the Labor Party was supposed to be the party of the working class, there were numbers of labor representatives in Parliament who were elected under other auspices than those of the Labor Party. For the purposes of this study, no distinction will be made between Labor Party labor representatives and non-Labor Party labor representatives, as all of the latter were of trade union origin.

It cannot, obviously, be claimed that this labor group in the House of Commons, together with the Trades Union Congress and the Labor Party Conferences, represents accurately the working people of Great Britain. The significance of the study lies not in the ascertainment of representative labor opinions and policies; it lies in the discernment of the new tendencies which labor leaders have been trying to convert into accepted and practised public policies. For, if public opinion consists, as Mr. Lippmann says it consists, for the most part of stereotypes, what the labor leaders have been trying to do is to popularize a new set of stereotypes. The labor leaders have constituted a highly organized minority in the body politic of Great Britain; they have set before themselves the task of making that minority into a majority. With their experience, they, as a body, are the best qualified to know the needs and desires of the rank and file and will seek to advance their stereotypes accordingly.

There is another significance in confining this study to labor leaders, especially parliamentary labor leaders. Popular interest in, and popular understanding of, foreign questions are always very limited. For the most part, such questions are decided by the leaders. Whether in opposition or in office, the reaction of labor to foreign affairs is determined largely by the attitude of the leaders.

Even this limited scope of the study meets with one further difficulty. In advancing these "stereotypes," the leaders have shown at times widely diverging tendencies. At the one end, we have men like Keir Hardie, James Ramsay Macdonald, and Philip Snowden, who asserted their independence of the other parties on almost all occasions; in the middle there is a large group who followed them on most occasions but at times only with great reluctance or not at all; at the other end, we have a small group who acted with the other labor representatives only on questions affecting directly trade-union interests. While it is difficult to decide which of these groups was more representative of the rank and file, it is plain that this very difference among the leaders is representative of the trade union world. For this reason, it would falsify results to discount one group in favour of others or to impose an artificial harmony on all of them. The distinction of these groups may, however, be advantageously kept in mind in order to appreciate more fully the process of setting in motion the new tendencies in foreign policy.

2. "Imperialism" is used throughout this study in a descriptive sense. No attempt is made here to determine whether it is morally right or wrong, whether it is biologically necessary or only parasitical. Nor does the frequent use of the phrase "British imperialism" imply a prejudice against the British empire. If this study were concerned with Germany or France, "German imperialism" or

"French imperialism" would necessarily be used as frequently.

What does "imperialism" describe? It describes, in the first place, the process of gaining the political control, partial or complete, of other peoples and lands for the political or economic advantage, fancied or real, of the home people and country. Secondly, it describes the process of keeping such control, once gained, in opposition to the expressed wishes of the peoples so controlled.

The gaining and keeping of such control may be effected through war or diplomacy or both, directed either against the native peoples or against rival imperialist powers or against both. "Imperialism" denotes, in the third place, the augmentation of armaments on land and sea and the formation of diplomatic alliances, understandings, and accommodations for the purpose of adding to or keeping empires.

Logically, imperialism may be exercised with free trade or protection. Generically, imperialism usually parallels protection. By this is meant that imperialism is born of the same forces as protection: the party demanding expansionist policies is also the party that demands a protective tariff. This, however, should not be pushed too far: protection may be due to nationalist rather than imperialist influences. Where there has been such a process of empire-building as that of Great Britain's, if a protective tariff is proposed with the express purpose of strengthening the so-called bonds of empire, such tariff comes clearly within the scope of imperialism. If an industrially undeveloped country such as India proposes a protective tariff in face of overwhelming competition by the industrially well-developed countries, such protection would be nationalist rather than imperialist.

No one who has read any of the nationalist and imperial-

ist apologetic literature of the past century will fail to see the somewhat dogmatic and artificial character of the distinctions that have been made. The boundary between nationalism and imperialism is admittedly shadowy. The difficulties do not end even with an accepted definition of nationality. If a land-locked nation could not exist without a sea-port and if the sea-port could only be gained by force from another nation, would the gaining of the port under such conditions be a sign of nationalism or of imperialism? If the plea of necessity makes it nationalism, not imperialism, much of the building of the British empire may be said to be the outgrowth of nationalism.

Under modern economic conditions, there is hardly a nation that does not have needs which can only be supplied by things produced or situated beyond its own boundaries. The choice is for the most part not open between satisfying and not satisfying these needs; the choice is among the different modes of satisfying them. They may be satisfied by the exclusive control of other lands and peoples; they may be satisfied through ordinary commercial exchange; in case of a limited commodity, the need for it may be satisfied through agreement with other nations. From this point of view, imperialism is aggressive nationalism and its antithesis is internationalism.

For the sake of consistency, it will be necessary to cling to the distinctions made even though they seem somewhat arbitrary.

## CHAPTER II

### LABOR AND INDIA

#### *a. The Issues*

INDIA occupies a central position in British imperial policy. Its area, population, and natural resources make it the most important of all the oversea members of the British empire. As a source of raw materials, a market for manufactured goods, and a field of investment, its uses to Great Britain surpass those of the other colonies and Dominions. In one respect, its value in the British polity has been enhanced in recent decades, since the great Dominions have ceased to be amenable to the old colonial system, which is still—in some regards in an aggravated form—in full operation in India to-day. This importance of India to the empire the government of Great Britain has at all times fully recognized. It has motivated Great Britain to a large degree in her diplomatic relations and in some of her wars with the other world powers. The attitude of British organized labor towards British imperialism in India ought, therefore, to afford a significant index of labor's general imperial policy.

The questions which have troubled Anglo-Indian relations in the last forty years fall into four groups. In the first place, Indians have been insistent in demanding a greater share in the government of their country. The Indian Councils Act of 1861, which continued to be in force till 1892, provided Legislative Councils for the Vice-

roy and for the Governors of Bombay and Madras. In each of these Councils, the Viceroy or the Governor and his Executive Council were *ex officio* members; in addition, the Viceroy was to appoint from six to twelve and the Governor from four to eight members, half of whom must be non-official, European or Indian. The Councils, so constituted, were not given any power of decision or the right of interpellation. Under this scheme, the share of the Indians in the government was limited to a few members in the Legislative Councils.<sup>1</sup> There was no Indian participation in the Executive Councils. The number of Indians in the civil service was negligible, the requirement for examinations in London rendering impossible the admission of a large number. Between 1861 and 1892, the government of India was changed in only two minor respects: the functions and powers of the municipal boards and cess committees were amplified and Bengal and North-West Provinces were given similar Legislative Councils.

Indian sentiment, as voiced by the Indian National Congress, demanded at first an enlargement of the Legislative Councils, the *election* of a majority of their members, effective control by them of legislation and, particularly, of finance, and simultaneous civil service examinations in England and in India. After 1905, under the stimulus of the agitation over the partition of Bengal, Indian nationalism stood for self-government within the empire, or a Dominion status. Although the Congress has not demanded independence, the word "swaraj" means different things to different groups among Indian nationalists to-day: to some, it is self-government within the empire; to others, it is independence; to some, "swaraj" is to be achieved through peaceful means; to others, it implies revolution.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sir Verney Lovett, *A History of the Indian Nationalist Movement* (London, 1920), p. 31.

During the past forty years, the British government has enacted three measures to meet the demands of India, first in 1892, then in 1909, and lastly in 1919.

The second group of questions which has disturbed Anglo-Indian relations includes fiscal and social policies. Indian nationalists have differed with the government, and political groups in Great Britain have differed with one another, on such social questions as factory laws, famine relief, and education. The British policy and method of financing Indian railways and irrigation works with British loans have at times been questioned; it was felt that India benefited less from these undertakings than Great Britain, particularly, British investors. Indians and some Britishers have questioned the justice of charging to Indian revenue the expenses of military campaigns on the frontier, campaigns in which India felt no interest, and of other campaigns in other parts of the world.

While all these questions of factory laws, famine relief, education, loans, military expenditure, are each in itself of some importance and have been the cause of considerable controversy, the central question in this group is that of the customs tariff. In order to appreciate the importance of this issue, some facts must be adduced. In 1874, Indian import duties stood at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent on cotton twist and yarns and at 5 per cent on fabrics. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce protested to the Secretary of State for India, urging that these duties were protective, that American and Egyptian long-staple cotton was being imported to make goods to compete with Lancashire, and that a large number of new mills were being projected in India. In consequence, the customs evaluation of cotton goods was lowered and a tariff was imposed on long-staple cotton. Internal necessities sometimes led the Indian government to raise the duties. Lancashire always immediately pro-

tested, and to satisfy Lancashire, Indian import duties were either lowered or abolished, or a countervailing excise on native manufactured goods was imposed. This manipulation of Indian tariff has generated the belief that "India's fiscal policy is dictated from Whitehall in the interests of the trade of Great Britain."<sup>1</sup>

Indians recall with pride that when commercial relations began between England and India, India exported cotton goods and received bullion in payment. They believe that the decline of their industry was due partly to the industrial revolution in England and partly to the bounties which England granted to English manufacturers and the heavy import duties which England levied on Indian goods. They speak with some bitterness of their belief that the very industrial revolution which gave England her commercial supremacy was made possible by the plunder of Indian treasures after England's victory at Plassey. They figure, with William Digby, that there was up to the end of the nineteenth century a "drain" of Indian wealth to England to the amount of more than six billion pounds sterling, consisting partly of unfavorable balances of trade and partly of official remittances.<sup>2</sup>

Indian public opinion is unanimous in the belief that without a protective tariff Indian textile industry will never be developed. Writings of Indian economists, such as Romesh Dutt's *The Economic History of India in the Victorian Age*, all strive to show with figures the hampering effects of the successive tariff laws that the government has passed. Resolutions of the Indian National Congress demand insistently a tariff under which Indian industry may be developed. The British government has shown a tend-

<sup>1</sup> Report of Joint Select Committee on Government of India Bill, *Parliamentary Papers*, vol. iv, 1919, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Lajpat Rai, *England's Debt to India* (New York, 1917), *passim*.



ency to meet this demand of India only within the last three years.

The third group of questions is concerned with coercion. During the past forty years, prosecution of Indian agitators and rioters has been more or less continuous. Political reforms and the enactment of exceptional coercive laws have at times gone side by side.

The fourth group of questions deals with frontier policy. For strategical or commercial reasons, the British government in India has pushed forward in Burmah, Tibet, Chitral, Afghanistan, and Persia. While these questions concern the rights of other peoples besides those of the Indians, they are most conveniently treated here, except Persia, which is best reserved for treatment in connection with the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907.

These, then, are the issues which have dominated Anglo-Indian controversies. Keeping them in mind, we shall proceed to study the record of the action or lack of action on the part of the leaders of the organized labor of Great Britain as each of these issues came before the British people for settlement. Although the chronological order adopted here is sometimes confusing, it will serve better to show if there has been any change, any development, during the last forty years in the reaction of British labor to British imperialism in India.

### *b. The Record*

From 1880 to 1886, India attracted the attention of Parliament mainly in connection with frontier questions. The reforms of the Viceroy, Lord Ripon, were mostly administrative in character and aroused controversy more within India than in Great Britain. It will be remembered that when the Liberals came into office in 1880, withdrawal from Afghanistan was ordered. In the following

year, Stanhope (non-laborite) moved in the House of Commons a resolution of censure of the Government for the withdrawal, contending that the retention of Candahar was necessary in face of the Russian advance.<sup>1</sup> The laborites voted with the Government to defeat the resolution. In 1885, Russia defeated Afghanistan at Penjdeh. Gladstone characterized Russia's action as bearing "the appearance of an unprovoked aggression," and ordered war preparations both in England and in India. No protest was raised in Parliament by any member, laborite or non-laborite.

In February, 1886, Gladstone's Government moved in the House of Commons that the expenses of the Burmese campaign be paid out of the revenue of India. Hunter (non-laborite) opposed the demand; he thought it unjust to make poverty-stricken India pay for a military campaign which her people did not approve. The laborites, with the exception of Henry Broadhurst, who was Under-Secretary for the Home Department, voted against the Government.<sup>2</sup> The definitive annexation of Burmah was decided upon in the course of the year. In August, as soon as Parliament was reassembled, W. R. Cremer (laborite) opposed this policy in a motion which stressed the importance of the sentiments of the Burmese people, who, "by their active hostility and armed resistance to the invading forces, have shown that they have no desire to live under British rule."<sup>3</sup> He wished to repudiate the doctrine that Great Britain was justified in invading and annexing other countries for the sake of extending British commerce or extending the Dominions of the Crown. Two of his fel-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 259, pp. 2033 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 302, pp. 939 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 308, pp. 798 *et seq.*

low-laborites, Burt and Rowlands, spoke in support of the motion. In the division, all the laborites voted against the Salisbury Government.

From 1886 to 1889, the House of Commons received as a matter of routine the annual statements of the Secretary of State for India; there was no extensive debate and no extraordinary questions were raised. From 1889 to 1891, we find the laborites, particularly Cunningham Graham, George Howell, and Henry Broadhurst, constantly urging the Government to pass factory laws for India. The plea was both for the welfare of Indian workers and for easing their competition with British workers. In the meantime, in India itself, the National Congress had been started and was demanding political reforms. To this problem, Parliament addressed itself from 1890 to 1893.

Charles Bradlaugh (non-laborite), while attending the Indian National Congress in 1889, promised to work for a bill in Parliament, increasing the number of non-official members in the Indian Legislative Councils and introducing the principle of election as opposed to that of appointment. In 1890, he and Justin M'Carthy and five other members (all non-laborites) brought such a bill into the House of Commons.<sup>1</sup> The Government of Lord Salisbury decided to counteract it with a bill of its own. The bill, entitled the Indian Councils Act (1861) Amendment Bill, was passed by the House of Lords and came to the Commons where it remained for two years without any action being taken. Charles Bradlaugh pressed the Government for action through the two years of waiting.

The Bill, as finally introduced in the Commons in 1892, provided three changes in the Government of India.<sup>2</sup> It extended the powers of the Legislative Councils, which were

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 341, pp. 173 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 3, pp. 52 *et seq.*

to be permitted to discuss fully the annual budgets, although no vote was to be taken on the individual items. It secured the right of interpellation, under rules to be framed by the Viceroy and the Provincial Governors. It practically doubled the membership of the Councils. As to the mode of selecting the non-official members, whether by appointment or by election, and if by election, by what electors, the whole matter was left to the government in India. C. S. Schwann (non-laborite) made repeated attempts during the second reading and in committee to add a clause specifying election. Against this, Curzon, the Under-Secretary for India, Gladstone, and Bryce all contended that while election to a limited degree was desirable, it was best left to the discretion of British administrators in India. Seymour Keay (non-laborite), a supporter of the Schwann amendment, replied that if they knew the nature of the Indian bureaucracy they would not expect it to adopt voluntarily the elective principle. In this effort, Schwann had the support of Swift McNeill, Sir W. Plowden, and Keay (all non-laborites). They failed, however, to pass any of their amendments. No laborite took part in the discussion in any stage of the Bill. As no division lists are on record, we are left in the dark as to whether they voted with Schwann or with Curzon and Gladstone. It should be added that the Indian government did adopt in a limited degree the elective principle in the carrying out of the provisions of the Bill.

This measure, supported by all the Unionists and a large majority of the Liberals, did not satisfy Indian national sentiment. In particular, it left untouched the conditions of the civil service. In 1893, Herbert W. Paul (non-laborite) moved in the House of Commons for simultaneous civil service examinations in England and India.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 13, pp. 102-140.

The motion had the vigorous support of Sir William Wedderburn (non-laborite). In spite of the opposition of the Liberal Government, it was passed. The Government immediately sent the terms of the motion to India where the officials reported them to be impractical. No laborite had any part in this whole movement.

From 1894 to 1905, a succession of varied questions in connection with India claimed the attention of Parliament from time to time. In the former year, the Indian government reimposed an import duty of 5 per cent. on cotton goods and for the first time levied an excise of 5 per cent. on native manufactured goods. In the spring of 1895, Lancashire representatives in Parliament, including Samuel Woods, laborite, complained about the incidence of this new revenue scheme in India. They wished, they stated, the prosperity of India, as India was Lancashire's best market; they desired only fair terms of competition. Already, Indian textile industry had driven English yarns not only from the Indian market but from the markets of China and Japan also. This new measure had caused the discharge of seven thousand workers in the mills of Lancashire. The Secretary of State of India must remember, they reminded him, that he was a British minister. To this, H. H. Fowler, the Secretary, replied that he was accused by India of being a minister, not for India, but for Lancashire. The resolution which the Lancashire members put forward was defeated by the Commons.<sup>1</sup> The agitation, however, was continued. Two deputations from Lancashire interviewed the Secretary. The result was a lowering of the tariff to 3½ per cent. and the imposition of an equivalent excise on all Indian cotton goods.

Indian troops were sent to take part in the Soudan cam-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 30, pp. 1285-1361.

paign under Lord Kitchener. In 1896, the Salisbury Government asked the House of Commons for permission to charge the expenses of these troops to Indian revenue. John Morley (non-laborite) moved the rejection of the Government's demand. Three labor members took part in the division and all three voted with Morley.<sup>1</sup> In the same year, Sir William Wedderburn moved a vote of censure of the Government for the occupation of Chitral.<sup>2</sup> Although no division list is given, we can infer from the nature of the questions which some of them asked in the House that the laborites supported Sir William.

The last years of the nineteenth century in India were years of famine and plague. There was universal unrest; nationalism grew. Indians were restive especially because the British plague administration forced the disinfection of dwellings and the removal of plague-stricken people to hospitals. Agitators attacked not only the plague administration but the government in general. Two British officers were assassinated. This was followed by the prosecution of G. B. Tilak, a prominent nationalist leader, and of newspapers and their editors. We find Swift McNeill (non-laborite) protesting in the House of Commons on August 5, 1897, against the regime of coercion. His motion censured the Government for seizing famine, plague and pestilence in India "for an attack on the freedom of the press in India and for the revival of the system of arrest of British subjects in India under the law of *lettre de cachet*."<sup>3</sup> In 1898, during the debate on the Address, Herbert Roberts (non-laborite) moved an amendment condemning the Government along the same lines as the motion of Mac-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 42, pp. 801 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 37, pp. 516 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 52, pp. 437 *et seq.*

Neill.<sup>1</sup> Both these attempts were defeated in the Commons. The laborites took no part in the debates, but they voted on both occasions with the minority.

The government in India, under Lord Curzon, added coercive measures. The Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure were amended; the scope of the phrase, "disaffection with the government," was enlarged; editors were required to give bond just as habitual vagabonds and suspected criminals had been required; all offenses against the state were placed under the jurisdiction of local magistrates instead of the Court of Sessions or the High Court as had been the previous practice. In August of 1898, Roberts again censured the Government, moving in the Commons the repeal of these amendments. The motion was negatived, the laborites voting with Roberts.<sup>2</sup>

During the years of famine, three times efforts were made in Parliament to get the Government to make grants for relief in India, by Sir William Wedderburn in 1897, Souttar in 1900, and W. S. Caine in 1901 (all non-laborites). All these efforts failed, the laborites voting on all three occasions with the minority.<sup>3</sup>

The first of the two debates, during the period, on British loans to India, occurred in 1898. The Government asked for the authorization of a £10,000,000 loan for railways and irrigation in India. Sir William Wedderburn at once opposed this policy; he doubted the benefits that railways and irrigation works were supposed to confer on India; he claimed that at least the loan should not be authorized until a select committee had investigated and reported "that such loans were in the interest of the Indian taxpayer and

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 53, pp. 1063 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 64, pp. 930 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 45, pp. 517 *et seq.*; vol. 86, pp. 1435 *et seq.*; vol. 89, pp. 1105 *et seq.*

would not unduly increase the burden he now sustained." Sir Charles Dilke and Sir Wilfred Lawson supported Sir William. The laborites, though taking no part in the debate, voted for a select committee. The motion, however, was defeated.<sup>1</sup>

In the same year, the Government asked for parliamentary permission to charge to Indian revenue the expenses of the campaign on the northwestern frontier of India. Laborites and independent Liberals joined in opposing this policy. Six years later, a similar question arose in connection with the Tibetan expedition. Colonel Younghusband invaded Tibet in 1903 and forced the Tibetan authorities to sign a treaty with England, which, among other things, exacted an indemnity from Tibet, opened a number of trade marts, and required that no Tibetan territory should be ceded to any foreign power without British consent. The House of Commons raised questions about the allocation of the indemnity, whether to the Indian or to the British treasury; no member, laborite or non-laborite, raised the question of the rights of the people of Tibet or the suzerain rights of China. The government also wished to charge the expenses of the expedition to India, but laborites and independent Liberals voted against it.

The organization of the Labor Representation Committee in 1899 was one of the indications of the growing insurgency of organized labor in Great Britain. The general election of 1900 returned, however, only two of the Committee's candidates, although thirteen other laborites were elected. From this time, we find the laborites taking a more aggressive part in Parliament. The 1895 debate on Indian tariff was initiated by a non-laborite; in 1903, Lancashire protested again, this time against the 3½ per cent duty which remained. On this occasion a Lancashire laborite,

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 59, pp. 304-324, 425-452.



D. J. Shackleton, was selected to make the motion. He voiced his sympathy for India; when famine came, Lancashire employers and operatives jointly raised money for relief of the Indian sufferers. He, too, only wished for fair competition; he was willing that the excise should be abolished as well as the duties on imports other than cotton goods. As the recent Indian budgets were satisfactory, he saw no reason why the cotton duties should not be abolished. Earl Percy, the Under-Secretary for India in the Balfour Cabinet, contended on behalf of the Government that cotton imports represented 40 per cent. of the total imports of India; to abolish the cotton duties would make the customs service not worth the trouble and expense. Moreover, Indian sentiment was unanimously in favor not only of keeping the duties but of abolishing the excise. All the Government could do was to maintain the existing fiscal regime which was not protective. He hoped that the members of the House would look at the matter not exclusively from the point of view of the British manufacturer. The Commons defeated the motion of Shackleton but all the labor members in the division voted for it.<sup>1</sup>

From 1905 on, political questions again came to the forefront in Anglo-Indian controversies. The main cause of this new wave of Indian nationalism was the division in that year of Bengal into the province of Western Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. The line of demarcation was so drawn that Mohammedans formed a majority in Eastern Bengal. The partition was at once strongly opposed by the leaders of the National Congress, who proclaimed that a foreign government had insulted and tried to efface Bengali nationality. Political agitation became extremely heated. A boycott

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 127, pp. 1185 *et seq.*

of British goods was instituted. In the 1906 Congress, Indian nationalists formulated their political demands in the one phrase of self-government within the empire.

Towards the end of the parliamentary session of 1905, when the Government of Balfour was about to be replaced by that of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Cathcart Wason (non-laborite) moved in the Commons that the House should provide more opportunities for the discussion of Indian affairs and that to that end the salary of the Secretary of State for India should be placed on the British estimates. He pointed out that usually the House could only discuss Indian affairs when the Secretary made his annual statement which always came at the end of the session. He thought that the welfare of three hundred million fellow-subjects deserved more attention than that. The motion was defeated by a vote of 65 ayes and 116 noes, labor contributing seven of the ayes.<sup>1</sup> Next year, Keir Hardie (laborite), while making a similar motion, denounced the exclusion of the Indians from the higher offices in the government of their own country "because of the desire of educated English classes to keep India as a preserve for their own sons." In the division, Hardie had the support of all the nineteen fellow-laborites present.<sup>2</sup> On the same day of the Hardie motion, James O'Grady (laborite) surveyed the Indian situation in general. He found the country poverty-stricken. He told the House that thirty million pounds sterling was annually drained out of India without return, that the European officials alone took away every year four million. Famine was getting worse. Only one child out of six of school age was attending school. India needed above everything primary educa-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 147, pp. 1229 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 161, pp. 594 *et seq.*

tion and scientific training in agriculture.<sup>1</sup> In the same year, Herbert Roberts (non-laborite) moved an amendment to the Address, urging the modification of the partition of Bengal and a larger share for the people of India in the government of their own country. The Liberal ministry with John Morley as Secretary for India promised political reforms but refused to undo the partition of Bengal.

In June, 1907, after the annual statement by Morley, G. A. Hardy (non-laborite) moved for an inquiry into the causes of unrest in India. O'Grady seconded the motion. To him, the causes of unrest were chronic poverty, recurrent famine, illiteracy, excessive taxation, and the discouragement of executive ability among the Indians. The remedy lay in compulsory primary education and a larger policy of self-government.<sup>2</sup> Two months later, Morley introduced the first of his reform measures, the Council of India Bill. Its provisions included the enlargement of the Council of the Secretary for India from twelve to fourteen members, a reduction of the term of office of each Councillor, the requirement of recent experience in India, and the power of the Secretary to appoint Indians to the Council. C. J. O'Donnell (non-laborite) and O'Grady at once moved the rejection of the Bill. Their criticisms were almost identical: the Council, so constituted, was ineffective; the ex-officials who were members in it were not disposed to criticize officials; the Indians, if appointed by the Secretary, were not likely to be representative. They demanded that a member of the House should sit in it and that the Indians to be appointed should have held some elective office in India.<sup>3</sup> Morley succeeded in inducing them to withdraw their motion. In the Committee, O'Donnell moved a num-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 161, pp. 633-637.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 173, pp. 919 *et seq.*

ber of amendments which were either withdrawn or defeated, and the Bill was passed without modification.

At the beginning of the 1908 parliamentary session, Dr. V. H. Rutherford (non-laborite) moved an amendment to the address, stating that "comprehensive measures of reform are imperatively necessary in the direction of giving the people of India control over their own affairs." O'Grady, in seconding the amendment, declared that the reforms of Morley so far were inadequate. He advocated again a system of free and compulsory primary education. "He wished to emphasize the statement . . . that the partition of Bengal was carried out for reasons other than those publicly advanced. . . . Lord Curzon acted on the principle of 'divide the people and you will rule,' and he took care so to draw the line as to separate the people into religions. All the Mohammedans were on one side of the line which divided the province, and all the Hindoos on the other."<sup>1</sup> Morley, he insisted, was wrong in accepting the partition as a settled fact, and the arrest of Lajpat Rai was most impolitic. The Government of Campbell-Bannerman again promised reforms and the amendment was withdrawn.

The year 1908 witnessed the second debate on a British loan to India for railway and irrigation purposes. Dr. Rutherford, following the example of Sir William Wedderburn in 1898, moved for a committee of investigation. Keir Hardie seconded the motion. To him, both railways and irrigation works in India had objectionable features. Railways had increased the cost of living and the land tax; they made possible the carrying-off of the surplus grain grown in plentiful years so that in seasons of scarcity there were no reserves to fall back upon as in pre-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 183, pp. 396 *et seq.*

railway days. The irrigation works had been undertaken more as revenue-raising methods; they earned an annual net income of from £750,000 to £1,250,000; the interest on their capital ran from 25 to 30 per cent. a year. The income which might otherwise benefit the natives was absorbed in the increasing military expenditure of the country. On this occasion, unlike that in 1898, the labor vote was divided, four being with the Government and fifteen with Dr. Rutherford.<sup>1</sup>

In 1909, we come to the second of the three important political reforms of the period, the Indian Councils Bill, familiarly known as the Morley-Minto reforms. As originally introduced in the House of Lords by Morley (become Lord Morley of Blackburn), the Bill doubled the membership of the provincial Legislative Councils, as the Bill of 1892 had doubled the previous number. The larger provinces were to have forty-six members, and the smaller, thirty-six members in the Councils. The Viceroy's Legislative Council was to be increased from twenty-four to sixty-two members; of this number, twelve, instead of four, were to be elected. The Provincial Councils were to have a non-official majority, but the Viceroy's Council was to retain its official majority. The Councils were to have the power of passing resolutions in the nature of recommendations. The Executive Councils of Madras and Bombay were to be enlarged and for the first time the smaller provinces were to have Executive Councils upon the proclamation of the Viceroy. The provision for new Executive Councils was embodied in Clause 3 of the Bill, which the Lords struck out.

The Bill, as introduced in the House of Commons, was without Clause 3. During the Second Reading in April,

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 198, pp. 171 *et seq.*

the Conservatives criticized the Bill for going too far; others like Dr. Rutherford and Mr. O'Donnell regretted that it did not go far enough. Dr. Rutherford thought that the official majority in the Viceroy's Council should be abolished and that the Lords' rejection of Clause 3 was unjustified. Keir Hardie rose to answer the Conservative argument that the educated middle class in India was not to be trusted. He was sure that the educated middle class was to be trusted nowhere, in India or in England, but that the remedy did not lie in the disfranchisement of the middle class but in the enfranchisement of the poor class. If after one hundred years of British rule, the Indians could not be allowed a majority in the Legislative Councils, it would be a judgment on British rule. He objected to the Bill in that it provided a separate electorate for the Mohammedans. He hoped that its provisions might be enlarged during the Committee stage.<sup>1</sup>

In the Committee, the Government, with the aid of labor and other votes, restored Clause 3 to the Bill. F. C. Mackarness (non-laborite) moved an amendment to the effect that no Indian should be debarred from any Legislative Council because he had been deported or imprisoned without being charged with or convicted of any offense. Dr. Rutherford moved for an equal number of elected and appointed members in the Councils. Both these amendments were not pushed to a division. Johnson-Hicks (non-laborite) moved for the limitation of the increase in the Madras and Bombay Executive Councils to three members, instead of four as provided by the Bill. This was opposed by the laborites as well as by others.

The Bill, with Clause 3 restored, went back to the House of Lords, which, this time, modified the Clause. Bengal alone was allowed to have an Executive Council; the other

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 3, pp. 594 *et seq.*

provinces, if it was proposed to give them Councils, could be deprived of them by an address from either one of the Houses. When this modified Clause reached the Commons in May, the Government of Asquith counselled acceptance of the compromise. It argued that if the administrators in India thought it wise to create additional Executive Councils, neither House would take upon itself the responsibility of refusing them. James O'Grady denounced the Lords' amendment as mistrust of India, as putting the reactionary in position to continue the one-man rule in many of the provinces in India. John Dillon (non-laborite) condemned the compromise because it placed India at the mercy of the Lords. The division on the Lords' amendment was ayes 254 and noes 104. Twenty-seven laborites voted with the noes and two with the ayes.<sup>1</sup>

While schemes of reform were being prepared in England, the government in India was using coercion to stop the agitation. In 1907, Lajpat Rai was deported. The government issued an ordinance forbidding all meetings which did not give a seven-day notice to the police and had not received from it specific sanction. The ordinance was later made the Seditious Meetings Act, to be in force for three years; it was renewed for six months in 1910 and was made permanent in 1911. In 1908, two English women were assassinated. Tilak was again imprisoned and the Code of Criminal Procedure was once more modified, empowering the magistrate to take evidence in all cases of offense against the state without the accused or a representative of his being present. The amendments also declared all associations encouraging violence unlawful and, in addition, gave the Viceroy power to proclaim unlawful any association which interfered with the maintenance of peace and order. In 1909, Mackarness moved an amendment to

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 5, pp. 418 *et seq.*

the Address, condemning coercion in India. Keir Hardie seconded the amendment. In the division which negatived the amendment, twenty laborites voted with Mackarness and six with the Government.<sup>1</sup> Six months later, in the regular annual debate on India, Hardie and O'Grady both pleaded with the Government to stop coercion.<sup>2</sup>

Next year, the Indian Press Act was passed, which forfeited the bond of five thousand rupees if the publication incited or tended to incite offenses against the state. J. C. Wedgwood (then non-laborite) moved in the annual Indian debate a resolution condemning the Press Act and the Seditious Meetings Act. Hardie seconded it. The division on the resolution resulted in 48 ayes to 277 noes. Of the 48 ayes, the laborites contributed twenty-three, or almost half. Seven laborites, however, voted with the noes.<sup>3</sup> Ramsay Macdonald (laborite), reviewing the whole Indian situation in the House of Commons, pointed out the unwisdom of the policy of the Government in the following terms: "The policy . . . which is expressed and emphasized by the Press Act, does a great deal to undo the good that the Reform Act did . . . it hampers the expression of opinion by the moderate native organs . . . it is going to destroy that great middle party of moderate constitutionalists upon whom ultimately the Government of India is going to rest."<sup>4</sup>

The first time the Labor Party Conference took notice of the Indian question was in 1911, in connection with the Indian Factory Bill. The Conference passed unanimously a resolution condemning the inadequacy of the proposed measure.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 1, pp. 807 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, pp. 1981 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 19, pp. 2032 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1995 *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> *Report of the 11th Annual Conference of the Labor Party*, p. 107.



In the three years before the World War, Parliament reverted to routine matters so far as India was concerned. No important political debate on India took place till the War was over. During the War, India claimed the attention of the House of Commons only in connection with the War Contribution of 1917. In March of that year, Austen Chamberlain, Secretary for India, moved that "... this House consents that a Contribution of £100,000,000 charged on the Revenues of India shall be made towards the cost of the War." In the preamble of the motion, Chamberlain told the House that the government in India had recommended the Contribution, "deeming the well-being and interests of the Indian Empire to be vitally concerned in the successful prosecution of the War," and that India had already made provisions for the annual charge for interest and sinking fund. One of these provisions, it was announced, was the increase of the import duties from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., the excise remaining at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. Two issues were, therefore, involved in this Contribution. Was it just to charge any part of the cost of the War to India? Was the increase in tariff justified?

On the day Chamberlain made the motion, William Barton (non-laborite, representing a Lancashire division) moved that the House was grateful to India for the Contribution of one hundred million pounds sterling but regretted that the tariff was to be increased, "thereby throwing an unnecessary burden upon the people of India, and inevitably causing a controversy between different parts of the Empire, which it was most inexpedient to raise during the War." He stated that in 1913 England exported £37,240,000 worth of cotton goods to India or 29.3 per cent. of the total cotton exports of the country, that competition between Lancashire and India was very keen, and that the new schedule was added at a time when there was consider-

able unemployment in Lancashire. Philip Snowden (laborite, representing a Lancashire division) supported the motion, believing that in promoting the interests of Lancashire he was promoting the interests of "the low-paid, poor, and poverty-stricken people of India." Robert Tootill (laborite, representing a Lancashire division) threatened the Government that the operatives of Lancashire would leave nothing undone in order to prevent the increase of tariff in India.<sup>1</sup>

As to the other question whether the Contribution ought to be made at all, no member of the House, laborite or non-laborite, concerned himself with it. For criticisms, we have to go outside of Parliament. The *Manchester Guardian* of March 15th thought that England had better only utilize the man-power of India and asserted that "the responsibility for the whole scheme is his (Chamberlain's) and that of the Indian Government." The London *Nation* of March 17th declared that if the Indian people had a voice in the transaction, "they would be forced to think twice before contributing out of their dire poverty this huge sum of a hundred millions to the resources of their wealthy rulers."

From 1917 on, India experienced another wave of intense agitation for political reform. In the 1918 Conference at Nottingham, the Labor Party passed a comprehensive resolution on India, which demanded that a Dominion status should be granted, on equality with South Africa and Australia, and instructed the Parliamentary Labor Party to use all their powers to bring it about "without undue delay."<sup>2</sup> The Coalition Government, with E. S. Montagu as Secretary for India, was busy throughout the year preparing new legislation. Montague went to

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 91, pp. 1156 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the 17th Annual Conference of the Labor Party*, p. 138.

India to study the situation and to get advice. The proposed reforms were announced by him in the House of Commons on August 6, 1918. The most important of them were: (1) dyarchy in provincial governments, that is, the division of authority between ministers appointed from the elected members of the legislature and responsible to it, administering "transferred subjects" such as education and public health, and executive councillors responsible, not to the legislature, but to the executive government, administering "reserved subjects;" (2) an elected majority in all Legislative Councils: (3) creation of an electorate of five million voters, and (4) placing the salary of the Secretary of State for India upon the estimates of the House of Commons, which was to appoint a select committee at the beginning of each session to report on Indian affairs before the vote of the Secretary's salary was taken. The whole scheme was to be subject to periodic review by parliamentary commissions with the view of furthering responsible government. The policy underlying these proposals was "the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire," with the British government determining when and what new steps should be taken.

The proposals came to the House of Commons on June 5, 1919, as the Government of India Bill.<sup>1</sup> On the Second Reading, B. C. Spoor (laborite), speaking for his Party, gave the Bill "a qualified approval," conceding that it did give a limited measure of responsible government in the provinces but criticising the autocratic character of the central government and the narrowness of the franchise. J. C. Wedgwood (laborite) went into details in his criticisms of the Bill. It would have been wiser, he declared, to have

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 116, pp. 2341 *et seq.*

been more courageous in constructing the Bill. It was defective in four respects: (1) lack of control of purse by the Indians, (2) the principle of indirect election and the small size of the Indian (central) Legislative Assembly, (3) the smallness of the electorate, and (4) communal and interest representation.

The Bill, after having been read a second time in the House of Commons, was referred to a Joint Select Committee of the two Houses. It must be remembered that in 1919 the Parliamentary Labor Party was His Majesty's Opposition in Parliament. B. C. Spoor was made a member of the Joint Select Committee. We find him moving a series of amendments during the proceedings of the Committee. The first important amendment he moved demanded the transfer of more subjects to the jurisdiction of responsible ministers in contradistinction to executive councillors. He wished to reserve to the latter only the subjects of law, justice, and police. The effect of the amendment would be to transfer to the elected representatives of the Indian people the control of municipal and district government, to be exercised through an organ similar to the Local Government Board in England, the control of irrigation, of the development of minerals, of land revenue, of famine relief, and of factory legislation, in addition to the control of education and public health which the Bill intended. The second important amendment aimed at the extension of dyarchy to the central government; it demanded that not less than half of the Viceroy's Executive Council should be selected from the elected members of the Indian Legislative Assembly. In these and other amendments in the Committee, Spoor found himself in a minority of one.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Report of the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill, *Parliamentary Papers*, vol. iv, 1919, p. 23.

From the Joint Select Committee, the Bill was re-committed in the House of Commons in December of 1919. We find Spoor and Wedgwood moving the same amendments and as unsuccessfully. The vote in the House of Commons on the amendment for transferring more subjects to Indian responsible ministers may be given as an index of the action of the Parliamentary Labor Party on the whole Bill. The amendment was defeated by a vote of ayes 47 to noes 260. Of the forty-seven ayes, the laborites contributed forty.<sup>1</sup>

On the Third Reading of the Bill on December 5th, William Adamson, Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party, summarized the attitude of his Party towards the Bill in its final form in the following terms:

The Labour Party are prepared to admit that the Bill is a definite move in the right direction, our principal criticism being that it does not go far enough, and that we are failing to take the fullest advantage of the help of the people of India themselves to assist us in the successful accomplishment of the great task we have in hand. The Bill gives to the people of India a measure of control in the various provinces, but no real control in the Central Government. This is a mistake and will rob us of the sympathetic co-operation of some of the best elements of the population of India. We also regret the very limited franchise which this Bill provides. . . . On the face of it, it is absurd that only five million out of a total population of two hundred fifty million have been enfranchised by this Bill.<sup>2</sup>

Under Montague, as under Lord Morley, political reforms in India were accompanied by coercion. During the World War, political agitation came within the scope of the Defence of India Act. As the Act was to lapse with the ending of the War, the government in India appointed a

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 122, pp. 459 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 793-799.

committee, headed by Justice Rowlatt, to devise new legislation. The recommendations of the Committee were subsequently passed in two Acts, known as the Rowlatt Acts. One of them provided that any person who had in his possession any seditious document intended to be published could be punished by imprisonment not exceeding two years. In such a trial, it was relevant evidence to show that the accused had been previously convicted of an offense against the state or had habitually associated with a person so convicted. Upon release, such a prisoner would be required to deposit bond and to notify the police of his residence or change of residence. The other Act provided trial without jury, and empowered the Executive to confine any suspect within a specified area and to arrest and search without warrant. All the non-official Indian members of the Council voted against the Bills. Gandhi and his followers announced that they would offer passive resistance. On March 30, 1919, the shops were closed to protest against the Bills. Ten days later, two Indian lawyers were deported; business was again suspended as a protest; the European guard at a railway shed was murdered and a bank was burnt. On April 13, a protest meeting was held on an enclosed square in Amritsar, in the Punjab, on which General Dyer ordered his soldiers to fire, killing about two thousand.

On May 22, during the regular annual debate on India, Neil M'Lean and Spoor (both laborites) moved for the suspension of the two Rowlatt Bills.<sup>1</sup> Towards the end of 1919, Wedgwood protested in the House of Commons against the Amritsar incident, declaring that "the Germans never did anything worse in Belgium. This damns us for all time."<sup>2</sup> The Labor Party, in the 1920 Conference in

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 116, pp. 621 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 123, pp. 1230 *et seq.*

Scarborough, after reaffirming its stand for the principle of self-determination in India and in other parts of the empire, expressed its sympathy with the sufferers of Amritsar, demanded the trial of the military officers responsible for the firing, and called for "the recall of the Viceroy as the only proof that can be given to India that this country is deeply moved by what has taken place and does not mean it to be repeated."<sup>1</sup>

During these last years of intense agitation in India, the Trades Union Congress took official cognisance of the Indian problem for the first time. The 1919 Congress received as a fraternal delegate B. P. Wadia, President of the Madras Labor Union. After his speech, the President of the Congress moved, "That this Congress learns with great pleasure that the workers of India are taking steps to form Trade Unions to improve their conditions, and hereby instructs the Parliamentary Committee to send out an appeal to all unions affiliated to this Congress for financial assistance to our fellow trade unionists of India." J. Henson (Sailors and Firemen) expressed the hope that the resolution was meant to be more than pious, for the Indian unorganized sailors were competing with British sailors. The resolution was passed unanimously.<sup>2</sup> Following the resolution of the Congress, a deputation of the Parliamentary Committee went to see the Secretary of State for India, complaining of the prosecution of Indian union workers and leaders, and obtained a promise from the Secretary that a bill protecting the right of organization would be introduced into the Indian Legislative Assembly.

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the 20th Annual Conference of the Labor Party*, pp. 156 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the 51st Congress*, pp. 329-331.

*c. Analysis and Summary*

1. With the exception of certain minor inconsistencies, the reaction of the leaders of organized labor in Great Britain to British imperialism in India, has been, as the record shows, increasingly anti-imperialistic. From 1880 to 1905, the champions of Indian rights in the House of Commons were such non-laborites as Charles Bradlaugh, S. C. Schwann, Sir William Wedderburn, Herbert Roberts, and Swift MacNeill; the laborites, whenever they acted—and they acted on many occasions,—always acted with these men. From 1905 to 1917, two laborites, Keir Hardie and James O'Grady, shared this championship with the non-laborites, Dr. V. H. Rutherford, C. J. O'Donnell, and F. C. Mackarness. After 1917, the laborites have been the principal, if not the only, champions of Indian nationalist aspirations in the House of Commons.

The record of the years from 1880 to 1905 shows that the laborites were anti-imperialistic but only in a passive way. They were passive, not because on the whole they were inactive in Parliament, but because they were not interested, and their constituents did not care whether they were interested, in Indian affairs. The energetic opposition of W. R. Cremer to the Burmese war does not invalidate this generalization, for he was more against war than against imperialism. The Burmese war was imperialistic but that was not the only imperialistic feature of the British policy in India. Cremer was in Parliament from 1885 to 1895 and from 1900 to 1910; during those years, he was not once as active in upholding Indian rights as the few non-laborites.

From 1905 to 1917, the leadership of Hardie and O'Grady in behalf of India was in every way equal to that of the others that have been mentioned. It should be pointed out that Hardie and O'Grady were members of the



Independent Labor Party, which was both in domestic and foreign policies more radical than the Labor Party. If they should be excluded from the record, the other laborites could be said to have continued the earlier tradition of passive anti-imperialism. Hardie and O'Grady, however, undoubtedly represented certain elements in the labor world.

The leadership of the Labor Party in Indian affairs after 1917 has been very generous towards meeting Indian claims. In declaring for a Dominion status for India, the Labor Party has satisfied in their entirety the political aspirations of the Indian people in so far as those aspirations have been officially voiced by responsible bodies.

2. This general trend of growing anti-imperialism on the part of the labor leaders has not been without inconsistencies. Their attitude towards British loans to India for building railway and irrigation works is one of the cases in point: in 1898, under a Unionist government, the laborites were solidly against such a loan; in 1908, under a Liberal government, the labor vote on the same question was divided. One laborite, Charles Fenwick, voted against the loan in 1898 and for it in 1908. In the years 1897 and 1898, all the laborites voted against coercion in India, but from 1907 to 1911, there was always a laborite minority which voted with the Liberal Government for coercion. Two laborites, Thomas Burt and Charles Fenwick, voted against coercion in the first period and for it in the second. In 1909, when the House of Commons divided on Clause 3 of the Indian Councils Bill, a laborite minority also voted with the Liberal government for acceptance of the Lords' amendment.

It is sometimes said that these inconsistencies were due to party tactics. This is not true if it is meant by party tactics that the dissenting laborite minority voted with the Liberal government in expectation of rewards in the nature

of legislation desired by labor, for the minority was so small that it had hardly weight enough to arrange a bargain with the Government. It is true in the sense that these inconsistencies were due to the general dislike of the Unionists which the laborites entertained in 1897 and 1898 and to the sympathy which some of the laborites had for the Liberals in the period from 1907 to 1911. Laborites like Burt and Fenwick were really Liberals in everything except when the Liberals refused to meet the demands of the trade unions. This is said not to discount the stand of these men, for they, too, represented certain elements, probably large elements, in the labor world and their record forms an integral part of the record of the rise of labor in British politics. To put the whole matter in general terms, one may say that imperialism met with less opposition, though not much less, from the laborites when practised by the Liberals than when practised by the Unionists, or that the reaction of some of the laborites to imperialism was sometimes not based on the merits of the question at issue but on its bearings on party politics.

3. On one question, the laborite group has been consistent, namely, Indian tariff. Throughout the forty years, the group gladly associated itself with the non-laborites of Lancashire in demanding free trade in India. It is significant that the first motion on Indian affairs ever made by a laborite in the House of Commons was for the abolition of Indian import duties on cotton goods. It is also significant that the only speech ever made by Philip Snowden in Parliament on an Indian question was the one in 1917 which demanded the abolition of import duties in India. Robert Tootill, who, during the War, was one of the strong laborite supporters of the government, did not hesitate to criticize it when it raised the import duties of India. In 1895, it was H. H. Fowler, member of a liberal govern-

ment, who resisted the demand for free trade in India; in 1903, it was Earl Percy, member of a Unionist government; in 1917, it was Austen Chamberlain, member of a coalition government.

In view of the inevitable increase of unemployment (which may be, however, only temporary) which an Indian protective tariff will cause in Lancashire and in view of labor's consistent stand for free trade, it may come about that British organized labor would not wish to give as much fiscal freedom to the anticipated Dominion of India as is enjoyed by Canada and Australia. Without fiscal freedom, India will certainly regard the Dominion status as incomplete or hollow; she will as surely point her finger at the inconsistency of such a state of affairs with the principle of self-determination for which the Labor Party stands.

The British government has since 1919 conceded so much to India as to appoint a tariff commission, with Indian representation on it, to ascertain what industries in India deserve protection and how much. The commission has recommended rather large increases for certain selected industries. Such a policy, one is inclined to believe, is more in accordance, though not completely, with the doctrine of self-determination and probably also a truer internationalism than the fiscal policy that the leaders of British organized labor have pursued towards India in the last forty years.

4. One other fact, though somewhat trite, should be pointed out in the record. British labor has taken an active interest in the factory laws of India. In the later 'eighties of the last century, the laborites in Parliament were passive in regard to almost everything connected with India except the matter of factory laws. The first resolution the Labor Party Conference ever passed on India and the only resolution that the Trades Union Congress has passed on India

were concerned with Indian factory legislation. In itself, this interest of British labor, though not entirely altruistic, is for the good of the Indian people. The only question one may raise is labor's scale of values in the whole Indian question.

This and the matter of the tariff go to show that wherever the incidence of an imperial policy on labor is direct, labor reacts without fail.

## CHAPTER III

### LABOR AND AFRICA

#### I

EUROPEAN interest in Africa during the nineteenth century underwent a decisive change about 1880. Before that date, the Dark Continent was a field of exploration for scientific and philanthropic reasons; it witnessed the labors of such men as René Caillié, Cameron, Speke, Grant, Barth, Nachtigal, and Livingston. After that year, the successors of the scientists and philanthropists became conquerors of empires for their respective national governments. In less than twenty years, almost the whole continent was partitioned among the European powers. If imperialism be construed to mean territorial expansion alone, the principal field of European imperialism during the last forty years has been Africa.

In the process of the partition of Africa, Great Britain took a leading part. Her possessions in that continent in 1800 were : Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Lagos, Walfish Bay, Cape of Good Hope, and Natal—comprising a total area of some four hundred thousand square miles, all on the coast, and all, with the single exception of the Cape of Good Hope, very limited in size. From 1880 to 1900, her African possessions were increased to three million square miles. The World War added to them another eight hundred thousand square miles.

These increases have been made in almost all parts of Africa. On the west coast, the old small settlement of

Lagos has expanded into the vast colony of Nigeria, enlarged since the World War by portions of German Togoland and Kamerun. In the south, Cape Colony and Natal have absorbed the Orange Free State and Transvaal to form the Union of South Africa, besides Zululand, Swasiland, and Amatongaland. The Union now controls as a mandatory the former German South-West Africa. To the north of Cape Colony is Bechuanaland Protectorate; further north are Rhodesia, which borders on Belgian Congo, and Nyasaland to the west of Lake Nyasa. On the east coast, British possessions, all acquired in the last forty years, include Tanganyika Territory (former German East Africa) and Kenya Colony and Protectorate (formerly named British East Africa), besides the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba. In the northeast corner of the continent, Great Britain controls in one way or other Egypt, Anglo-Egyptian Soudan, Uganda and British Somaliland. In all, the British empire in Africa comprises one third of the entire continent and equals in area the whole of Europe.

The case of Uganda throws considerable light on the process of empire-building in Africa. The British Imperial East Africa Company sent Captain Lugard, with an armed escort, to negotiate a treaty with Mwanga, the King of Uganda. Mwanga hesitated, because he had previously signed a treaty of protection with Dr. Peters, a German agent. In the words of Sir Edward Grey: "He (Mwanga) was not sure whether Dr. Peters or Captain Lugard was the stronger man."<sup>1</sup> Captain Lugard, "by rapping the table and speaking loudly," convinced the King of his strength and a treaty of protection was signed between Mwanga as King of Uganda and Captain Lugard as agent of the chartered company. The company subse-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. x, pp. 539 *et seq.*

quently failed and the territory was made a British protectorate.

The chief difficulties in empire-building in Africa were, therefore, rivalry with other powers and opposition from the natives, and the chief instrument was the chartered company. Great Britain met the competition of France on the west coast and in the Soudan. She encountered Germany on the west coast, in the south, and on the east coast. The two Conventions of 1890 solved partially this problem. The opposition of the native chiefs or rulers, which Great Britain had to overcome, varied from the meek acquiescence of Mwanga of Uganda, the sporadic efforts of Lobengula of Matabeleland, the fanatical uprisings of the Mahdi and the Mullah, the patriotic but weak resistance of Arabi, to the determined warfare of the Boers. All, strong or weak, savage or civilized, have had to submit to British rule. The chartered company, revived in the 'eighties, played a part in West, East, and South Africa. Its functions included trade and industry, government of the region, and negotiations with neighboring tribes.

In studying the reaction of the leaders of organized labor in Great Britain to British participation in the partition of Africa, it will be necessary to pay special attention to the three chief component factors that have just been named. In particular, it will be important to observe labor's reaction to the chartered companies. Although the struggle of the Boers for independence and lately the Egyptian nationalist movement have attracted more attention than other problems in Africa, it must be remembered that from the point of view of imperial expansion they are not necessarily more significant than other phases.

In order to treat the partition of Africa as one integral process, it will be better to follow here, as in the previous chapter, the chronological order.

## II

Circumstance made Transvaal and Egypt the scenes of the earliest British activity during the period of partition. The Conservative government of Disraeli annexed Transvaal in 1877. The success of Gladstone in the general election of 1880 gave the Boers a moment of hope. The delay of the Liberal government in restoring their independence led them to take up arms. In less than a month after their victory on Majuba Hill, the Boers gained self-government but not independence, for the Pretoria Convention of 1881 retained the suzerainty of Great Britain and stipulated British control of Boer foreign relations and a general British supervision over relations with native tribes. The defeat on Majuba Hill with the death of General Colley aroused in England the cry for revenge. Labor supported Gladstone in the refusal to re-open hostilities. We find W. R. Cremer<sup>1</sup> making great efforts in behalf of peace. He drew up an address to the government, with six hundred workmen's signatures on it, praying that the government would not shed more blood "to satisfy an insane craving for revenge before daring to do what is right." The whole episode was in the nature of a skirmish, seemingly clouding the political sky only for a brief moment.

In 1882, Great Britain went into Egypt to suppress the uprising led by Arabi and to uphold the authority of the Khedive. John Bright resigned from the cabinet as a protest against the intervention. Next spring, Sir Wilfrid Lawson and Henry Labouchere (non-laborites) moved an amendment to the Address, attacking the use of British forces in reconstituting the government of Egypt.<sup>2</sup> They

<sup>1</sup> Howard Evans, *Sir Randal Cremer, His Life and Work* (London, 1909), p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 276, pp. 138 *et seq.*



believed that Arabi was a patriot and that it was not good Liberalism to uphold an autocratic and corrupt ruler against a nationalist, constitutionalist movement. British intervention, according to them, was made for the single object of collecting the debts of the bondholders. In 1882 and 1883, no laborite expressed any opinion on the Egyptian policy of the government. Henry Broadhurst later admitted that he supported the vote of credit for Lord Wolseley's campaign, but his support could not have been very warm or representative of all the laborites, for when the government moved for an annuity for Lord Wolseley in recognition of his Egyptian services, both Broadhurst and Burt voted against the request of Gladstone.<sup>1</sup>

Troubles in Egypt led to a revolt in the Soudan. At once, three policies were open to the British government.<sup>2</sup> The Conservatives demanded that the Mahdi, the leader of the revolt, should be crushed and that the Soudan should be reconquered. John Morley and the Radicals urged that the Mahdi should be left alone. The government vacillated; at first, it only consented to send General Gordon to effect the evacuation of such Egyptian and British forces as had already gone into the Soudan; after the death of Gordon, it decided to crush the Mahdi but not to reconquer the Soudan. In the end, the government accepted the policy of Morley. Both Broadhurst and Burt voted with Morley; after the Morley amendment was defeated, they voted with Gladstone to oppose the Conservative resolution.

Transvaal, Egypt, and the Soudan were the areas that concerned Great Britain before 1885. In all three regions, the British policy seemed to be uncertain. The scramble for African possessions had hardly begun. In 1884 and

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 278, pp. 692, 693.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 284, pp. 1353 *et seq.*; vol. 288, pp. 31 *et seq.*; vol. 294, pp. 1052 *et seq.* For Division List, see *Times* (London), March 2, 1885, p. 8.

1885, two international agreements were signed by the British government, which foreshadowed coming events. The London Convention of 1884<sup>1</sup> between Transvaal and Great Britain is commonly believed to have made further concessions to the Boers. This was true in that British suzerainty was not expressly stipulated and that the British Resident for the supervision of native affairs was withdrawn. But the other clauses of the Convention revealed the essential policy of Great Britain in South Africa. The boundary of Transvaal, now called the South African Republic, was delimited in great detail. The Republic pledged itself not to encroach on any territory outside the defined limits. It also promised not to conclude any treaty or agreement with foreign states, except the Orange Free State, or with native tribes without the sanction of the British government. In other words, the South African Republic could at best hope to be left alone, surrounded on all sides by British territory. It could not hope for expansion or for direct access to the sea.

The other important document was the General Act of the Berlin Conference,<sup>2</sup> signed in February, 1885. It abolished the slave-trade; it provided for freedom and equality of trade for all the powers "in the Basin of the Congo, its embouchures and circumjacent regions;" it recognized the Congo Free State. The pertinent section to be mentioned here is Chapter VI of the Act, which laid down, as it were, the rules for the partition of Africa, felt to be impending. Two conditions must be observed by all powers in the occupation of new territory in Africa. In the first place, such occupation must be notified to the other powers, and in the second place, such occupation, to be valid,

<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Lucas, *A Historical Geography of the British Dominions*, vol. iv, pt. ii (Oxford, 1915), appendix.

<sup>2</sup> *Times* (London), February 28, 1885.

must be effective, that is, must be able to protect existing rights. The General Act of the Berlin Conference was followed immediately by feverish activity on the part of all European colonial powers in the acquisition of African territories.

### III

Ever since 1882, Dutch farmers had been trekking eastward into Zululand. After the death of Cetewayo, the Boers put his son on the throne on the condition that his territory should be a Boer protectorate. By 1885, Boer claims, established in contravention of the provisions of the London Convention, covered three quarters of the country. Great Britain, in the meantime, annexed St. Lucia Bay, the outlet of Zululand. In 1886, the two powers arrived at a compromise, Transvaal retaining the western portion and Great Britain keeping as her sphere of influence the coast. In 1887, Great Britain annexed the coastal region.<sup>1</sup>

To the west of Transvaal is Bechuanaland. The Boers had also expanded in that direction and had set up two Boer countries, Stellaland and the Land of Goshen. In 1885, Sir Charles Warren led an expedition into Bechuanaland, expelled the Boers, and proclaimed the country a British protectorate.

From 1880 to 1885, the National African Company was active on the Niger coast, making in five years some thirty treaties with the native tribes. In 1885, the British government proclaimed a protectorate over the Niger districts. The National African Company applied to the Gladstone government for a charter, which was approved by Lord Granville and actually issued in the following year by Lord Salisbury. The Company, under the new name of the

<sup>1</sup>Lucas, *op. cit.*, pt. i, pp. 300, 301.

Royal Niger Company, made in two years two hundred or more treaties with the native tribes and controlled for fifteen years an area of three hundred thousand square miles.<sup>1</sup>

Somaliland was Turkish territory under the administration of the Khedive of Egypt. In 1885, Great Britain annexed that part of it which lies directly south of the Gulf of Aden.

England had promised to withdraw from Egypt as soon as the authority of the Khedive had been restored. The Conservatives, who obtained power in 1886, gave no sign of their readiness to keep the promise. Sir George Campbell<sup>2</sup> (non-laborite) moved in the House of Commons the reduction of the vote for the Foreign Office to censure the government's unwillingness to withdraw from Egypt. James Rowlands (laborite) supported Campbell, declaring that everybody who had been watching Egyptian affairs was looking "for some indication that we are going to clear out of the country." In 1887, W. R. Cremer<sup>3</sup> (laborite) renewed the protest by moving an amendment to the Address. He believed that England would have recalled her troops from Egypt if it had not been for the financiers and bondholders. The government, however, sent Sir Henry Drummond Wolff to negotiate with the Sultan for a definitive British-Turkish regime in Egypt. When the grant for the special mission of Wolff came before the House, Charles Bradlaugh<sup>4</sup> (non-laborite) moved its reduction. In this, Bradlaugh was supported by the laborites as well as by the Liberals. Turkey refused to sign the agreement; England was forced to rule by the "advice" of her Consul-General, Sir Evelyn Baring.

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Papers, C-9372, 1899, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 309, pp. 892 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 310, pp. 656 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 311, pp. 1462 *et seq.*

After the annexation of Zululand by Great Britain, the only possible sea-outlet for the South African Republic was through Amatongaland, a strip of territory lying between Portuguese East Africa and Zululand. The Boers in 1887 made some agreements with the chiefs in the Trans-Pongola district, the northwest corner of Amatongaland. The British High Commissioner in South Africa immediately notified the Boer Republic that the queen of Amatongaland had placed her foreign relations under Great Britain and that therefore the entire area between the sea and Swasiland was within the British sphere of influence. The Boers, in their protest, stated, "... it must be that the British government has for its object to separate this Republic as far as possible from the Sea, and thus to retard its development, and finally to annihilate it."<sup>1</sup>

As a result of treaties made by Sir Harry H. Johnston, Great Britain acquired a sphere of influence in East Africa. In 1888, the British Imperial East Africa Company began operations in that region. It did not confine itself to British East Africa but proceeded to get control of Uganda. Both in East Africa and Uganda, British claims conflicted with German claims. The two powers reached an agreement in 1890. The Company, the second to be chartered within the period, administered for a few years a total area of three hundred thousand square miles.

The discovery of gold in Transvaal drew attention to Mashonaland. The British government sent J. S. Moffat, Assistant Commissioner of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, to interview Lobengula, the chief of Mashonaland and Matabeleland in February, 1888. Moffat persuaded Lobengula to sign a treaty with him, which, in return for British protection, pledged Lobengula not to sign any agreement with a foreign power without the consent of the British commis-

<sup>1</sup>Lucas, *op. cit.*, pt. ii, pp. 16, 17.

sioner. Cecil Rhodes and Alfred Beit and others secured from Lobengula certain mining concessions and in 1889 chartered the British South Africa Company to exploit their concessions. The charter defined the principal field of operation of the Company as "the region of South Africa lying immediately to the north of British Bechuanaland, and to the north and west of South African Republic, and to the west of the Portuguese dominions." There was no northern boundary for the Company. It eventually expanded to the borders of Belgian Congo. From 1889 to the present time, the South Africa Company has been administering a territory of four hundred thousand square miles.<sup>1</sup>

To prepare the country for development, the Company sent an expedition to Mashonaland. Portugal, which had cherished ambitions to link its possessions in East and West Africa, also sent armed forces into Mashonaland. A collision between British and Portuguese forces actually occurred. Lord Salisbury demanded that the Portuguese should withdraw. Upon refusal, he instructed the British minister at Lisbon to deliver an ultimatum and one British squadron to take a position off the Tagus and another off Mozambique. Portugal yielded. One month after the delivery of the ultimatum, we find Cremer<sup>2</sup> pressing the government to accept arbitration. He thought that British claims were better than Portuguese claims and that therefore Great Britain could afford to submit the matter to arbitration. With the exception of Henry Labouchere, no other member in Parliament voiced so strong a protest against the government policy as Cremer.

The signing of the Anglo-French Convention of 1890

<sup>1</sup> Henry C. Morris, *The History of Colonization* (New York, 1908), pp. 192-194.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 341, pp. 259 *et seq.*

cleared the British title to Nigeria. The Anglo-Portuguese agreement of 1891 established the claims of the South Africa Company.

It will be seen that the major British annexations in Africa before the World War took place between 1885 and 1890. In six years, Great Britain increased her African possessions by one million and two hundred thousand square miles. What did the laborites do? In regard to Egypt, the laborites associated themselves with Morley, Campbell, Bradlaugh, and Labouchere to demand British withdrawal. In the acquisition of Rhodesia, one laborite protested when Great Britain came into conflict with Portugal, a protest directed not against British claims in that region but against the mode of pressing the claims. Outside of these areas, Great Britain went ahead in the partition of Africa without a protest from labor. The fact should be added that Parliament as a whole hardly took any cognizance of the happenings in Africa.

#### IV

From 1891 to 1899, Great Britain, aside from the reconquest of the Soudan and the annexation of other small areas, was mainly occupied in Africa with the development of the territories already annexed.

Zululand gave Great Britain considerable trouble after its annexation. British policy aimed at substituting a more subservient chief for one disposed to be independent or unruly. In 1891, Picton (non-laborite) moved the reduction of the vote of the Colonial Office to censure the maltreatment of Zulu chiefs. Cunningham Graham (laborite), seconding the motion, observed that however convenient the removal of a chief might be for British policy it usually resulted in confusion, in more cattle-raiding and wife-stealing among the natives, until they fell under the twin blessings of civilization—drunkenness and immorality.<sup>1</sup>

The chartered companies by this time were subjected to some criticism. In 1891, Labouchere and G. B. Clark<sup>1</sup> (non-laborites) protested against the proceedings of the South Africa Company. In the following year, Graham<sup>2</sup> repeatedly urged the government to appoint resident inspectors in the territories under the companies. He would have the government assign a definite date for the termination of the companies' privileges, and pending termination of their rule, impose on them tributes to the exchequer and make them render annual reports to the government.

The year 1892 saw the first government proposal for an appropriation for railway-building in the recently acquired territories in Africa. In March of that year, the Conservative government asked for a grant of twenty thousand pounds for a railway from Mombassa to Lake Victoria Nyanza, in the territory of the Imperial East Africa Company. Labouchere and Swift MacNeill (non-laborites) led the opposition. They centered their attack on the chartered company, which, according to them, had been devoting too much of its energy to treaty-making and to expanding its domains, instead of to trade. The subsidy, if granted, would be a gift to a private company. Although Sir William Harcourt, the leader of the Liberal Opposition, refused to commit his party, on the plea that the government might have information which private members did not possess, a number of Liberals and all the laborites voted against the government.<sup>3</sup>

Misunderstanding between Lobengula and the South Africa Company in regard to the concessions led to the first Matabele War in 1893. Labouchere and John Ellis<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., pp. 935 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 4th ser., vol. 4, p. 1525; vol. 5, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 50 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 18, pp. 543 *et seq.*



(non-laborites) moved in November the adjournment of the House to protest against the war. They demanded that the government should take from the company the right of contracting any engagements with regard to the territory or government of Matabeleland and the right of making war. Both Balfour and Gladstone defended the company. No labourite voiced any opinion.

Uganda, after coming within the jurisdiction of the East Africa Company, experienced a series of religious wars, Mohammedans against Christian converts, Catholics against Protestants. In 1892, the company decided to abandon the territory. The Anti-Slavery Society sent a deputation to Lord Rosebery, then Foreign Secretary, to implore him not to leave Uganda to native rule. Lord Rosebery assured the Society's representatives that Uganda was too important to be abandoned. He sent Sir Gerald Portal to open fresh negotiations with Mwanga. In 1893, Labouchere moved for the recall of Portal.<sup>1</sup> Gladstone replied that Portal had been sent only to investigate and to report. Balfour thought that Gladstone was minimizing matters. Joseph Chamberlain stated that as Uganda was part of the compensation for the cession of Heligoland its abandonment was not to be thought of. Sir Edward Grey, then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, pictured the massacres that would follow the withdrawal of British rule. The motion of Labouchere was defeated by a vote of 368 to 46, the laborites voting in the minority. Sir Gerald Portal signed a provisional treaty of protectorate with Mwanga which the Gladstone government ratified in 1894.

We have already noticed a phase of the struggle between Boer and Briton for the control of the east coast. In 1895, the British colonial office under Lord Ripon declared Amatongaland a British protectorate, thus hemming in comple-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 10, pp. 539 *et seq.*

tely the South African Republic. The Boers protested against the action as being "unfriendly."

The reconquest of the Soudan was a prominent feature of Conservative policy in the last years of the nineteenth century. On the first vote of credit in February, 1895, the laborites voted against the government.<sup>1</sup> When Lord Kitchener had entered Khartoum, John Morley moved a vote of retrospective censure on the whole Conservative policy. The laborites voted with Morley, although some of the Liberals, including Sir Edward Grey, voted with the government.<sup>2</sup> A little later, the whole question was debated again on the motion of the government for a grant to Lord Kitchener for his services in the Soudan. The motion was carried by a vote of 393 to 51; the laborites voted in the negative while the Liberal leaders, Asquith and Campbell-Bannerman, voted in the affirmative.<sup>3</sup>

With the discovery of gold in Transvaal in 1886, a large immigrant population crowded into the South African Republic. The Boers, fearing that political control might pass into the hands of the Uitlanders, largely British, raised the residence requirement for naturalization to fourteen years. Lord Râpon tried, without success, to persuade the Transvaal government to reduce the period to five years. When Joseph Chamberlain succeeded to the colonial secretaryship, he at once pressed the negotiations with energy. Meanwhile, on the last day of 1895, Dr. Jameson, the administrator of the South Africa Company, led a raid into Transvaal territory, aiming to overthrow the Boer government by insurrection. The House of Commons appointed a select committee to investigate the circumstances of the

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 45, pp. 1439 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 67, pp. 457 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 72, pp. 327 *et seq.*

raid and the administration of the South Africa Company. The report of the committee found the raid a flagrant violation of the territory of a friendly power, established the responsibility of Cecil Rhodes in planning it, and cleared the colonial office of any complicity. In July, 1897, Philip Stanhope and Labouchere moved a resolution in the House, regretting the inconclusive character of the report, and urging the House to call Hawksley, Rhodes's attorney, to the Bar. It was pointed out by them that the refusal of Hawksley to produce before the committee certain telegrams which were known to be in existence, left ample room for the Boer suspicion of the colonial office and that Rhodes, though found in a large degree responsible for the raid, remained a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council. All the laborites in the division supported the resolution.<sup>1</sup>

In 1897, Sir Charles Dilke (non-laborite) moved that the government should take the initiative in calling a conference of European powers to consider further measures for the equitable treatment of the natives of Africa. John Burns (laborite) seconded the motion. He expressed the opinion that the African treaties were not creditable to the native chiefs who granted them or to the companies that asked for them. He doubted if civilization was a real benefit to the Africans. The motion was, however, defeated.<sup>2</sup>

Thus far, of the three chartered companies operating in Africa, the Royal Niger Company had not been formally criticised in the House of Commons. In 1899, when the government proposed to buy the rights and properties of the company, the Commons subjected it to a lengthy review. The bulk of the criticism was directed less to the company than to the government demand for the appropriation be-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 51, pp. 1093 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 48, pp. 426 *et seq.*

fore the publication of detailed figures. Three laborites, Burns, Steadman, and Woods, were present during the debate, voting in all stages against the government.<sup>1</sup>

The interest of Parliament in African affairs showed some increase from 1891 to 1899 over the previous period of 1885 to 1890. The interest of the laborites also increased. The chartered companies were criticized. The rights of the natives were sometimes inquired into. The policy of the reconquest of the Soudan was strongly though unsuccessfully opposed. The Jameson Raid aroused some bitter criticism. On the whole, the opposition to imperialism, with the possible exception of Henry Labouchere, was half-hearted and ineffective. The laborites took no determined stand on any one of the many questions that came before Parliament.

## V

The Boer War of 1899-1902 was the most dramatic event in the imperial career of Great Britain in Africa. In reality, it was but a step in that career. It is only as such that the war will be considered here.

Some of the remote causes of the war are found in the narrative that has preceded. At this point, we need only go back to the Bloemfontein conference of May, 1899. When the negotiations<sup>2</sup> between the South African Republic and the British government had come to a deadlock, the President of the Orange Free State arranged for a conference between President Kruger and High Commissioner Sir Alfred Milner. The latter suggested that the question of franchise for the Uitlanders should be taken up first, as upon the franchise depended a number of other questions and with it solved the others could be solved easily. Kruger

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 73, pp. 1289 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> For subjects of negotiation, see next page.

agreed to this but explained that with a shorter residence requirement for naturalization the Uitlanders would be able in a short time to dominate Transvaal. Milner proposed that the requirement should be reduced from fourteen to five years and that a number of new seats in the Volksraads should be created for the goldfield districts. Kruger made no definite reply as regards additional representation of the Uitlanders in the Volksraads but was willing to reduce the residence requirement to seven years. Both parties felt that they had conceded their maximum and the conference came to an end without removing any of the differences at issue.<sup>1</sup>

In August, the South African Republic made another set of proposals. Transvaal was to grant the five-year residence requirement which Great Britain had demanded. Eight new seats were to be created in the Volksraads for the representation of the goldfield district. To these concessions, three conditions were attached: (a) the present case should not be made a precedent for future interference in the internal affairs of Transvaal; (b) the claim of British suzerainty over the Republic should be dropped; and (c) all future disputes between the two countries should be settled by arbitration. Joseph Chamberlain as colonial secretary replied that Great Britain could not forego the right of protecting British citizens in Transvaal in the future, that British suzerainty over the Republic was a part of the existing conventions between the two countries and could not be abrogated, and that while Great Britain was willing to consider arbitration, the impending question—which included, besides the franchise, discrimination in the schools, Johannesburg municipal government, and the dynamite monopoly—could not be settled by arbitration. Upon the refusal of the conditions, Transvaal, in a note dated September 2nd, withdrew the concessions in regard to fran-

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Papers, C-9404, 1899, *passim*.

chise and to representation in the Volksraads. Chamberlain stated the position of the British government in a final note dated September 8th to the effect that Great Britain was willing to accept the concessions of Transvaal without the conditions, provided that a joint or unilateral British inquiry was permitted to examine into the operation of the new franchise laws. "If, however," the note ended by saying, "as they most anxiously hope will not be the case, the reply of the South African Republic is negative or inconclusive, Her Majesty's Government must reserve to themselves the right to reconsider the situation *de novo*, and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement."<sup>1</sup>

On October 9th, 1899, the South African Republic demanded arbitration of all questions at issue, the removal of British troops from the Transvaal border, and a reply within forty-eight hours.<sup>2</sup> War commenced on the 11th, the Orange Free State joining Transvaal.

Preparations for war had begun on both sides even before the Bloemfontein conference. In April, the Unionist government asked for an appropriation for the accommodation of increased garrisons in South Africa. In the committee on supply, Buchanan (non-laborite) moved a large reduction of the item. The laborites as well as the Liberals opposed the government.<sup>3</sup> When the appropriation was reported to the House of Commons, John Dillon (non-laborite) again moved its reduction. The government's plea was that since the South African Republic had initiated war preparations England must do likewise. Henry Broadhurst (laborite) told the House that Transvaal was only doing its duty in taking steps to defend itself against invasion, "especially bearing in mind the buccaneering raid

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Papers, C-9521, 1899, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary Papers, C-9530, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 70, pp. 250 *et seq.*

made into their territory not long ago." He and his fellow-laborites all voted with Dillon.<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of the Trades Union Congress towards the Boer War should be noted here. In September, 1899, it passed a resolution by a substantial majority urging the government to settle the dispute with Transvaal by peaceful means. W. C. Steadman, the president of the Congress, declared that he was in favor of extending the franchise to Uitlanders but that he opposed the use of warlike methods. Holmes (Cardiff Amal. Society of Railway Servants) stated that the government was only trying to retrieve its declining fortunes by a spirited foreign policy. Richard Bell (London Amal. Society of Railway Servants), Benjamin Pickard, M. P., and F. A. Fox (Cardiff Boiler-makers and Iron Shipfounders) joined in declaring the war to be one engineered by the capitalists in South Africa. G. D. Kelley (Manchester Lithographic Printers) and W. E. Clery (London Fawcett Association) opposed the motion on the ground that it was not within the purview of the Congress. The anti-war party, however, dominated the Congress of 1899.<sup>2</sup>

Parliament opened within one week of the beginning of hostilities. The Speech from the Throne and the debate on it were entirely devoted to the war. The opposition divided itself into two groups: the Official Opposition led by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and the Independent Opposition led by John Dillon and Henry Labouchere. Campbell-Bannerman thought the terms of the last Boer note were such that no government of a self-respecting country could take into consideration. He wanted the ministers, the parliament, and the people to unite to resist aggression and to repel the invasion of Natal and Cape

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 70, pp. 489 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 32nd Congress*, pp. 85-90.

Colony. The war, furthermore, should be prosecuted vigorously both for the interests of the empire and for the mitigation of sufferings, "and nothing that is requisite for this purpose will be refused by the House of Commons." Campbell-Bannerman, however, condemned the raising of the question of suzerainty in the negotiations. He wished that the government would declare that Great Britain did not harbour "the unworthy desire to establish a political superiority of Englishmen over Dutchmen at the Cape." The speech invited the retort of Balfour that it was "part of two separate speeches delivered by two different individuals on two entirely different subjects."

The Independent Opposition maintained that the war was caused by the claim of Great Britain to interfere in the internal affairs of Transvaal and by the massing of British troops on the Transvaal border. It demanded that the war should be stopped and the differences between the two countries should be submitted to arbitration. As to the plea that the war was really provoked by the Boer note of October 9th, Labouchere replied that it was forced from the Boers by the tactics of Chamberlain who had angled for the opportunity to throw the odium of beginning hostilities on the Boers.

Both the Official and the Independent Opposition offered amendments to the Address, one censuring the conduct of the negotiations and the other demanding arbitration. The amendment of the Independent Opposition was defeated by a vote of 322 to 54. In the minority were found thirty-seven Irish votes, fourteen non-laborite British votes, and five laborite British votes. The other amendment was defeated by 135 ayes to 362 noes; nine laborites and a number of Irish members and Liberals constituted the minority on this division.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 77, *passim*.



No laborite stated his views on the war during the first debate of the autumn parliamentary session. The ideas of the laborite group were expressed in the successive debates on votes of credit. Frederick Maddison declared that victory in the war would be as disgraceful as defeat, but that since the responsibility was with the government he would neither support nor oppose the government.<sup>1</sup> Henry Broadhurst called the war "a great sin and crime against humanity;" he believed that it was made by the South Africa Company. But as the war had been begun, he was for his country: "Our country may be right or wrong but our country before all when in danger."<sup>2</sup> John Burns denounced the newspapers for arousing anti-Boer sentiments and agreed with Broadhurst that the war was the work of the financial elements in South Africa. For this reason, he was determined to oppose it under all circumstances.<sup>3</sup> Havelock Wilson assured the House of Commons that he was not a jingoist and that he believed in upholding the integrity of the empire. As to the war, he felt it was clear that it was forced on the government by the Boers.<sup>4</sup>

Between March and September, 1900, Great Britain achieved the decisive victories of the war. On March 13th, Lord Roberts entered Bloemfontein; on May 28th, the Orange Free State was annexed; on June 5th, Pretoria was captured, and on September first, Transvaal was annexed. The war, however, was continued to June, 1902, and during this period the political controversies in England shifted to new questions, such as the annexation of the Boer countries, continuation of war or termination by negotiation, and the system of concentration camps.

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 77, pp. 399 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 671 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 78, pp. 376 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 798 *et seq.*

The 1900 Trades Union Congress met in September at Huddersfield. A resolution was proposed, condemning the "cruel and unnecessary war in South Africa" and calling for its termination by negotiations. The sentiment at the Congress was more divided than in 1899, but the resolution was passed by a small majority.

When Parliament opened in December, the question of the termination of the war was foremost in the debate on Address. Three laborites, Broadhurst, Burns, and Hardie, urged the government to declare an armistice for the purpose of opening negotiations. Hardie, after a general attack on the war, told the government that the only way to show that Great Britain desired peace was to arrange an armistice for a month so that the terms of the British government could be discussed on their merits. The Address, which implied approval of the continuation of hostilities, was voted by 265 to 23, labor contributing six of the negative votes.<sup>1</sup> Immediately after the Address had been voted, the government asked for a further vote of credit. The laborites voted against the government while the Official Opposition voted with it.<sup>2</sup>

The new Labor Party held its first conference in 1901. Its resolution on the war condemned British policy from the beginning, protested against the annexation of the two republics, and demanded arbitration of all questions at issue. The Trades Union Congress of the same year, however, refused to follow the example of the Labor Party; when an attempt was made to suspend the standing orders to discuss a resolution demanding the cessation of hostilities, it was frustrated by votes representing 724,000 against 333,000 constituents.

The attitude of the various political groups in the House

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 88, pp. 145-150, 282-291, 298-303.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 576 *et seq.*

of Commons in regard to the termination of the war was shown in the debate on Address in January, 1902. The Official Opposition moved an amendment which, while expressing readiness to support the prosecution of the war, deprecated the unbending attitude of the government in initiating negotiations. The Independent Opposition moved to drop the clause expressing further support of the war. The laborites voted for the amendment of the Independent Opposition; when it was defeated, they threw their support to the amendment of the Official Opposition.<sup>1</sup>

On the questions of the destruction of private property and of the concentration camps, the laborites, Official Opposition, and Independent Opposition were united in opposing the government. In February, 1901, John Dillon moved a resolution to stop the concentration camps as being opposed to recognized usages of war. The laborites supported it.<sup>2</sup> In July, during a debate on an appropriation bill, Hardie criticised in vigorous terms the same practices.<sup>3</sup> When the government asked for a grant of one hundred thousand pounds for Lord Roberts for his services in the war, Hardie dissented, declaring that Lord Roberts' treatment of Boers as rebels and the destruction of private property were flagrant violations of Hague Conventions. In the division, Hardie had the support of all his fellow-laborites.<sup>4</sup> In March, 1902, the laborites renewed their attack on the irregular methods of warfare in South Africa.<sup>5</sup>

The position of the laborites in regard to the Boer War may be said to lie between the Official Opposition and the Independent Opposition. With the exception of Havelock

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 101, pp. 324 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 89, pp. 1239 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 97, pp. 755 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 98, pp. 698 *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 104, pp. 402 *et seq.*

Wilson, they agreed with Dillon and Labouchere as to the real causes of the war. They, too, stressed the influence of the South Africa Company in bringing about the war and refused to believe that the responsibility for it should be placed on the Boers simply because they delivered the ultimatum. On the other hand, not all of the laborites followed the Independent Opposition in positively opposing the prosecution of the war. A few—Burns, Cremer, and Hardie—did so, the majority abstained from taking part in votes of credit. As one reads the speeches of the acquiescent majority of the laborites, one gets the impression that they would have liked to oppose the war more vigorously than they actually did, a failure more of moral courage than of intellectual conviction.<sup>1</sup>

If, however, we discount the stand of the Independent Opposition on account of its overwhelming Irish element, we see that the laborites, of all British political groups in the House of Commons, were most opposed to the war. With the exception of Havelock Wilson, no laborite cast a vote which implied positive support of the war.

It should be observed that the Trades Union Congress was weaker in its opposition to the war than the laborites in Parliament and that its opposition diminished as the war progressed.

## VI

The Boer War dominated for almost three years British-African relations. As soon as it was over—indeed, even while it was in progress—similar African questions came

<sup>1</sup> Thus Thomas Burt in later years expressed himself in regard to his attitude towards the war: "If I have any regret, it is that I was, perhaps, too easily cowed, and that I should not have protested more emphatically than I did against what I regard as the most disgraceful war in our history." See Aaron Waton, *A Great Labor Leader, Being a Life of the Rt. Hon. Thomas Burt, M. P.* (London, 1908), p. 200.

before the House of Commons as had come before it during the years from 1891 to 1899. From the termination of the Boer War to the beginning of the World War, only three important new questions emerged: Chinese labor in Transvaal, responsible government for the two Boer countries, and Egyptian nationalism. The latter question did not become intense until after the World War.

Troubles in Uganda, necessitating military measures, led the Unionist government to ask Parliament in 1900 for an appropriation for the government of the Uganda protectorate. Sir Charles Dilke (non-laborite) moved a large reduction. John Burns, in seconding the motion of Dilke, denounced the government policy as being a part of the mad desire to extend British administration to all parts of the world. He warned his country that it was, in foreign expansion, "biting off more than we can chew, swallowing more than we can digest." In the division, all the laborites voted against the government, while the Liberals, led by Campbell-Bannerman and Grey, voted with it.<sup>1</sup> Two months later, when the government asked for a large appropriation for railways in Uganda, the laborites again opposed and the Liberals supported the government.<sup>2</sup> In 1902, the same question came up, and labor stood firm in opposition.<sup>3</sup>

In Ashanti, on the west coast, troubles similar to those in Uganda led to war in 1901. Thomas Lough (non-laborite) moved a reduction of the vote of the Colonial Office to censure the government. Broadhurst seconded the motion. He felt, he told the House, that the government was pursuing a policy of universal war in Africa. It seemed to be the boast of the Colonial Secretary that he had made

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 79, pp. 895 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 82, pp. 289 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 116, pp. 501 *et seq.*

more wars than any of his predecessors. The government, he continued, was trying to teach "savages the wickedness of human sacrifice by indulging in great slaughter, with modern weapons, of the poor savage people we sought to rule. The basis of the movement in Ashanti was the curse of gain." Broadhurst and his fellow-laborites all voted with Lough<sup>1</sup>

The same state of affairs prevailed in British East Africa. Sir Charles Dilke led in 1901 a movement to get the government to withdraw from the protectorate entirely. He censured in particular the recurrent wars in that region. Six laborites—Abraham, Broadhurst, Burns, Burt, Fenwick, and John Wilson—joined Dilke.<sup>2</sup>

In Somaliland, there was a revolt led by the "mad Mullah", a personage of the same character as the Mahdi in the Soudan. The government in 1901 asked for an appropriation in aid of the administration of the protectorate. Sir Brampton Gurdon (non-laborite) and John Burns offered a resolution to reduce the sum by ten thousand pounds. Burns said he objected to "Mullah hunting" in Africa. The same six laborites, together with Keir Hardie, supported the vote for reduction.<sup>3</sup> In 1904, when the question came up again, Broadhurst and Burns joined in demanding a reduction. Broadhurst believed that the so-called mad Mullah was nothing more than a patriot and an imperialist in his own sphere. All the laborites voted with Broadhurst.<sup>4</sup> Next year, labor renewed its attack on war expenditures in Somaliland<sup>5</sup>

From 1904 to 1914, a series of important but miscellane-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 91, pp. 430 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 479 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 498 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 130, pp. 1033 *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 142, pp. 740 *et seq.*

ous questions became prominent in connection with South Africa. In March, 1905, the Unionist government appointed Lord Selborne High Commissioner. Swift MacNeill (non-laborite) and Keir Hardie moved the adjournment of the House of Commons to protest against the appointment. "At a time," said Hardie, "when the Colonial Office was synonymous with treachery and duplicity so far as South Africa was concerned, the noble Lord now appointed was connected with that Department of the Government." The laborites voted solidly against the government.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout 1906, when the Liberals were in office, T. F. Richards (laborite) pressed the government to levy a war contribution from the mine owners of South Africa, to the amount of thirty million pounds.<sup>2</sup>

In 1904, the Liberals twice moved votes of censure on the government for the systematic importation of indentured Chinese labor into Transvaal. On both occasions, the laborites voted with the Liberals.<sup>3</sup> After the Liberals came into office in December, 1905, they announced that no more permits would be issued for importing Chinese laborers. This did not satisfy the laborites. Hardie pointed out that the question of Chinese labor was associated with the question of slavery and wished to be assured that Chinese workmen would not be punished until they had been tried before a court and found guilty. Stephen Walsh (laborite) declared that the mere cessation of importation was not sufficient; there must be immediate repatriation.<sup>4</sup>

In December, 1906, the Liberal government moved for permission to grant responsible government to Transvaal

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 142, pp. 491 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 153, p. 1093; vol. 156, p. 969.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 129, pp. 1501 *et seq.*; vol. 132, pp. 252 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 152, pp. 193-197, 250-254.

and Orange River Colony. The laborites welcomed the proposal but demanded that the new constitutions should provide guarantees against forcing black men from the land into the mines. They suggested that the best guarantee would be the enfranchisement of the black man on the same basis as the white man.<sup>1</sup> When the South Africa Federation Bill was in the House in 1909, the laborites moved an amendment to drop the color bar in the election of representatives for the Union parliament.<sup>2</sup>

Serious labor troubles occurred in South Africa in 1913. Martial law was declared and some labor leaders were deported. British labor, in Parliament and outside, sought to help the struggling laborers in South Africa. In the House of Commons, Ramsay MacDonald, as Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party, moved an amendment to the Address in February of 1914, asking the government to reserve the Indemnity Bill which was then before the parliament of South Africa and which contained a provision for the deportation of labor leaders. The amendment was defeated by a vote of 214 to 50. Of the fifty votes in favour of the amendment, thirty-two came from the Labor Party.<sup>3</sup> Two months later, the Party made another effort in the form of a resolution for the maintenance of the rights of citizens throughout the British empire. The motion, being an expression of opinion and not demanding definite executive action, was allowed to pass.<sup>4</sup>

In Egypt, nationalism had been growing ever since 1892.<sup>5</sup> Towards 1907, Egyptian agitation, under the leadership of Mustapha Kemal, was becoming violent. Lord Cromer re-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 162, pp. 795 *et seq.*; vol. 167, pp. 1107 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Report of Tenth Annual Conference*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 58, pp. 353 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 60, pp. 1270 *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> In 1892, a new Khedive, with nationalistic tendencies, began his rule.



signed to make way for a younger man to deal with the situation. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman moved in the House a grant of fifty thousand pounds in recognition of Lord Cromer's services in Egypt. Thirty-two laborites, partly on grounds of economy and partly on account of their disapproval of Lord Cromer's anti-Nationalist views, voted against the grant.<sup>1</sup> But the leadership of pro-Egyptian agitation in the House of Commons fell to such non-laborites as J. M. Robertson, John Dillon, and T. M. Kettle. In 1908, Robertson moved an amendment to the Address, calling for concessions to the demands of the Egyptian National Assembly.<sup>2</sup> Two years later, following a speech made by Theodore Roosevelt in London, in which he counselled the English to be firm in Egypt, Sir Edward Grey, as Foreign Secretary, made a declaration of policy to the effect that he could not make concessions to Egypt "so long as the agitation against British occupation continues." Kettle, in protesting against the statement of Grey, declared that Roosevelt only saw the Dublin Castle of Egypt and "learned the occupation view of the occupation."<sup>3</sup> Dillon joined in the protest.

## VII

Early in the World War, Egypt, which had remained nominally a Turkish province, was proclaimed a British protectorate. That proclamation, according to the Egyptian point of view, was unilateral; it was, at any rate, provisional and valid only for the period of the war. After the Armistice, Egyptians thought that the time had come for a definitive settlement of the status of their own country. Zaghloul Pasha, the new nationalist leader, and a number

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 129, pp. 885 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 183, pp. 418 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 5th ser., vol. 17, pp. 1366 *et seq.*

of his associates asked for passports to go to Paris to present the cause of Egypt before the Peace Conference. Zaghloul and three other nationalist leaders were deported to Malta. The news of the deportation started the March (1919) revolution in Egypt. On the 20th of the month, J. C. Wedgwood (laborite) pleaded in the House of Commons for further measures of self-government in Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

In May, B. C. Spoor (laborite) advanced in the House the view that whatever foreign assistance Egypt needed should be given by the League of Nations. Wedgwood, however, believed that Egypt should be made a self-governing Dominion within the empire.<sup>2</sup> These differences between two laborites testified to the fact that as yet the Labor Party had no definite policy in regard to Egypt, as was later admitted by the Party's delegates to the Berne Labor and Socialist Conference.

The Labor Party hastened to define its policy in its Conference in 1920. It asked for self-determination for Egypt; it demanded "that British action in Egypt, whether for the protection of the Suez Canal, the administration of the Soudan, or otherwise, should be limited to that to which the responsible National Government of Egypt may freely give its consent."

The details of the labor settlement of the Egyptian question were elaborated by a special committee of the International Section of the Labor Research Department. The report of the committee stated that labor could tolerate only two forms of government for Egypt, either independence or voluntary entrance into the British empire as a self-governing Dominion. In case Egypt chose independence, the report would have the government take the following steps: 1. British garrison and British advisers and officials

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 113, pp. 234 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 115, pp. 1851 *et seq.*

should be withdrawn; 2. foreign communities in Egypt should be protected by the Minorities Commission of the League of Nations, which will administer the rights enjoyed under the capitulations; 3. the Suez Canal and Egyptian territories east of the Canal should be administered by Great Britain for a term of years at the end of which the League should decide whether British control should be retained or abolished in favor of Egyptian control; 4. the Soudan should be mandated to Great Britain for a term of years, after which the League should decide whether the mandate should be continued or the Soudanese should choose for themselves independence or union with Egypt; 5. "the navigation of the Nile and allocation of Nile water for irrigation to be regulated, for the period of the British mandate in the Soudan, by agreement between the British and Egyptian Governments with appeal to the arbitration of the League of Nations." The reason for this solution of the Soudan question, as stated in a foot-note of the report, was that there was antipathy between the Soudanese and the Egyptians and that if the Soudan were handed over to Egypt, internal troubles would follow.<sup>1</sup>

In order to appreciate more fully labor's reaction to British imperialism in Egypt, it is necessary to compare its suggested solution of the Egyptian question with that of the Milner Mission. The Mission went to Egypt in December, 1919, and was engaged in its task throughout 1920. The report of the Mission first declared a Dominion status for Egypt impossible as being unacceptable to Egypt, "because Egyptians do not regard their country as a British Dominion or themselves as British subjects." But Egypt, the report pointed out, has become a nodal point in all communications by air, land, and sea; Great Britain could not

<sup>1</sup> *The Government of Egypt: Recommendations by a Committee of the International Section of the Labor Research Department, passim.*

give her independence without conditions. To solve this difficulty, the Mission made five proposals. 1. A treaty of alliance should be signed between Great Britain and Egypt, Great Britain to aid Egypt in defense of Egyptian integrity and Egypt to afford Great Britain assistance in any war, even if the integrity of Egypt is not involved therein, including the use of Egyptian harbors and all other means of communication. 2. Egypt, in her foreign policy, should not adopt an attitude or conclude any agreement with a foreign power which might be prejudicial to British interests. 3. Egypt should confer on Great Britain the right of maintaining a garrison in Egypt, outside of the Canal Zone. 4. Egypt should appoint a financial adviser and an official in the Ministry of Justice with the concurrence of Great Britain. 5. The Soudan should remain Anglo-Egyptian, to be governed by an English viceroy and English provincial governors; in future, the allocation of Nile water should be regulated by a permanent commission representing Egypt, the Soudan, and Uganda.<sup>1</sup>

It will be recognized at once that the Milner scheme is, from the Egyptian point of view, far less satisfactory than the labor scheme. In regard to Egypt proper, the Milner scheme includes and the labor scheme does not include: (a) an English military force in Egypt outside of the Canal Zone, (b) the appointment, with the concurrence of the British government, of a financial adviser and of an official in the Ministry of Justice, (c) an alliance pledging Egyptian resources in a purely British war, and (d) some degree of limitation of the freedom of Egyptian diplomacy: points to which the Egyptian nationalists, in their negotiations with the Milner Mission, had raised objections. As regards the Soudan, there is also some difference between the Milner scheme and the labor scheme, though here the dif-

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Papers, Egypt no. 1, C-1131, 1921, *passim*.

ference is at bottom not large. The former advocated the maintenance of the *status quo*, while the latter modified it by the introduction of the League of Nations. The Labor scheme is in itself unsatisfactory to Egyptian nationalism: Great Britain ruling the Soudan as a mandatory of the League may result in no practical difference; the right of appeal to the League may be illusive for Egypt; British rule, during the term of the mandate, may prejudice the prospects of the eventual union of the Soudan with Egypt; at all times, the power controlling the Soudan controls the economic life of Egypt. Labor's plea that the mandate of the League was not to be made a cloak for national aims would hardly, under the circumstances, satisfy Egyptian nationalism.

In Egypt proper, however, the labor scheme is at all points satisfactory to Egyptian nationalism.

## VIII

British territorial acquisitions in Africa during the war were, in extent, next only to the acquisitions of the six years from 1885 to 1890, the heyday of the partition of Africa. From 1914 to 1918, the various German colonies in that continent successively fell to British or British-French arms: Togoland in 1914, German South-West Africa in 1915, Kamerun in 1916, and German East Africa in 1918. Under the mandatory system of the Covenant of the League of Nations, German East Africa was assigned to Great Britain, German South-West Africa to the Union of South Africa, Togoland divided evenly between Great Britain and France, and Kamerun assigned to France with a narrow strip on the northwest to Great Britain. In all, the British empire gained through the World War approximately eight hundred thousand square miles of territory in Africa.

The mandatory system, as set forth in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League, provided guarantees for freedom of conscience and religion; prohibited slave trade, arms traffic, and liquor traffic; called for the demilitarization of the land and people; and stipulated equal opportunities for the trade of all members of the League. Criticism of this system is perhaps premature, but its important features resemble the regulations for the Congo Free State which the powers framed at the Berlin Conference in 1884-'85. The failure of that experiment lends the mandatory system to the suspicion that it is but a veil for annexation.

In its statement of war aims,<sup>1</sup> labor called for the administration of German colonies in Africa by the League of Nations. This policy is open to criticism; to be perfectly non-imperialistic, it should be applied, not only to German, but also to all European colonies in Africa. As it was, it was less imperialistic than the mandatory system, although it might involve administrative difficulties. British labor protested against many features of the peace treaties, but so far as we have been able to learn, it has been silent on the mandates Great Britain received in Africa.

## IX

It will be seen that the leaders of organized labor in Great Britain have shown no reaction to the partition of Africa if this phrase is interpreted in a strictly territorial sense. Neither in the period of outright annexation from 1885 to 1890 nor in the days when the mandatory system was put in operation have the labor leaders reacted in any significant way. They have not demanded or encouraged acquisition of territory in Africa; they have also not opposed their government when acquisitions were made.

When conflicts with other European powers occurred,

<sup>1</sup> *Gf. infra*, pp. 200-205.

labor leaders opposed the government if the conflict threatened war as in the case of the Anglo-Portuguese controversy of 1890, but simply acquiesced if the conflict was composed through ordinary diplomacy as in the cases of the Anglo-French and Anglo-German Conventions of the same year.

In regard to British relations with native African tribes, labor leaders showed no interest when treaties of annexation or protectorate were concluded between the chiefs and the British government or British chartered companies. The government and the chartered companies were criticised when wars occurred or when an appropriation was asked for.

The cases of Egypt and of Transvaal are somewhat different from the other African territories. Labor's record in regard to Egypt has been on the whole consistent. Though it followed Gladstone in the policy of intervention, it was in a half-hearted way. When the issue of intervention passed, labor joined the Radicals in demanding withdrawal. Before the World War, it sympathized with Egyptian nationalism though not as actively as some of the non-laborites. After the World War, the Labor Party stood for self-determination for Egypt, although it hesitated on the question of the Soudan.

In regard to Transvaal, the laborites reacted on the whole in an anti-imperialistic way from the Jameson raid through the Boer War. But the reaction was more motivated by dislike of war than by keen appreciation of and opposition to imperialism. The process of preventing Boer expansion and of shutting the Boers from the Sea, in which the Liberals and the Unionists shared, was carried out without a labor protest. The Boer War was being made even before the Jameson raid, by the Pretoria Convention, the London Convention, the annexation of Zululand, and the annexation of Amatongaland, and in a lesser degree by the

annexation of Bechuanaland and Matabeleland. Labor's reaction to the Jameson raid and to the Boer War was, of course, anti-imperialistic, but it was ineffective because it failed to check this earlier process.

On the question of Chinese labor, of organized labor in South Africa, and of the treatment of native African workers, British labor leaders reacted in a humanitarian way and incidentally in an anti-imperialistic way. For the Chinese workers, they demanded both repatriation and better treatment. As regards the natives, they objected to forced labor in the mines and demanded for them political power. The sympathy shown by British labor for the trade unionists in South Africa was especially noteworthy. One of the stimuli of imperialism in South Africa was cheap labor. In helping to stop or decrease the supply of cheap labor, British labor's reaction on all these questions was in effect anti-imperialistic.

The division between the socialist wing and the trade unionist wing in the labor ranks is absent in the reaction of British labor to British imperialism in Africa. Before 1905, Keir Hardie was the only socialist in the House of Commons and he sat only from 1892 to 1895, and from 1900 to 1915. After 1905, Ramsay Macdonald, Philip Snowden, and James O'Grady were all in Parliament. But from 1880 to 1920, when the laborites acted at all on African questions, they acted as a body, with, of course, the exception of the Boer War. The older trade unionists in Parliament, Broadhurst, Burt, and Fenwick, took as much interest in African affairs as Keir Hardie.

The predominant characteristic of the reaction of British labor to British imperialism in Africa from 1880 to 1920 is acquiescence.



## CHAPTER IV

### LABOR AND IRELAND

THERE are certain differences as well as similarities between the Irish question and other British imperial questions. India, for example, belongs, by race, culture, and geography, to the extra-European world; Ireland, on the other hand, though in the main racially, culturally, and geographically distinct from Great Britain, belongs with Great Britain to the European world. Without taking into consideration the finer distinctions of philology and ethnology, it can be said that India and Great Britain are members of different families, while Ireland and Great Britain are members of the same family. Ireland, furthermore, was, until very recently, a part of the United Kingdom. These considerations have led to the comparison of Ireland to the Southern Confederacy at the time of the American War of Secession. The comparison, if valid, would call for the exclusion of the Irish question from this study.

The analogy between Ireland and the Southern Confederacy, it need scarcely be pointed out, does not hold. The South and the North of the United States of America had no such racial, cultural, and geographical distinctions as exist between Ireland and Great Britain. The South was not brought into the Union at the beginning by conquest; nor were the rights of the later conquest long maintained by the North. If we must find an analogy, it will be found, not in the Southern Confederacy, but in Belgium before 1830, in Hungary before 1867, and in Poland before the

World War. For the problem of Ireland, like the problem of these countries, has been one of a subject nationality. The subjection was maintained in all these cases, with, of course, some minor dissimilarities, for considerations of the welfare of the subjecting nation; it was opposed in all these cases by the subjected people. Thus viewed, the Irish question deserves inclusion in this study. For, in essence, what the Irish people have been striving for is the undoing of the economic, cultural, and sentimental (nationalistic) consequences of the British conquest. The majority of the Irish people, while not demanding complete separation from the British empire, have claimed full equality in the British commonwealth of nations.

A list of the concrete issues that have disturbed Anglo-Irish relations in the last forty years would further reveal the imperialistic aspect of the problem. Economically, the Irish people demanded the restoration of the land, which had been taken from them in earlier centuries. They also demanded in the economic sphere fiscal autonomy in order to develop Irish industries which they thought had been suppressed or neglected by the British government. Fiscal autonomy would also enable them to be relieved from unequal taxation, which a Royal Commission had reported to exist between the two islands. Comparative poverty and recurrent famines, in the face of the country's fairly abundant natural resources, as well as the memory of prosperity under Grattan's Parliament, were the arguments the Irish used to justify the economic demands.

A number of the cultural consequences of British control of Ireland had already been undone before 1880, by the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts (1828), by the Catholic Emancipation Act (1829), by the endowment of Maynooth College (1845), and by the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland (1869). The question of

education for Catholics, however, came up at times after 1880. Aside from religion, the cultural struggle in the 'nineties took the form of the revival of Gaelic language and literature. Although this question is not strictly connected with government, it appears as both a cause and an effect of the Irish struggle for nationhood.

These economic and cultural questions were part of the larger question of Irish nationalism. It was felt that Irish prosperity and Irish culture could better be promoted under an Irish government. But in addition to the economic and cultural questions, the nationalistic struggle involved the factor of sentiment. It was contended that Home Rule was a right, not depending on the material conditions of the country; even if Ireland had been prosperous, she should have persisted in her demand of government by her own people. "Ireland was once, and Ireland is to be once more, a nation."

The question of coercion, so prominent throughout the last forty years, is but an incident of the other questions.

These are the main issues of the problem. The reaction of British labor leaders to these issues is the central interest of this study. Other facts will be introduced only in so far as they are necessary to evaluate the reaction.

#### I. 1880-1886.

The period opened with the emergence of Charles Stewart Parnell and the Land League in Irish politics. The winter of 1880 was marked with distress and agrarian crimes in Ireland. W. E. Forster, Irish Secretary in Gladstone's cabinet, resolved on coercion. The Speech from the Throne foreshadowed his policy. Parnell at once moved an amendment, objecting to the suspension of the constitutional rights of the Irish people. The debate on the amendment was protracted over seven nights. In the end, it was defeated

by a vote of 57 to 435. Of the three laborites in Parliament, Alexander Macdonald was absent, Broadhurst voted with Gladstone, and Burt voted with Parnell. Burt found only three other British members in the same division lobby, Labouchere, Bradlaugh, and Collings.<sup>1</sup>

On January 24th, 1881, Forster asked leave to introduce the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Bill.<sup>2</sup> Agrarian crimes, Forster stated, reached the highest record in 1880, numbering 2590, whereas the previous worst year was 1845 when agrarian crimes numbered only 1920. The cause was attributed by him to the Land League. The Bill conferred powers on the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to arrest, by his warrant, any person he suspected of treasonable practices or of intimidation or disturbance of order in any prescribed district. The Irish members in Parliament claimed that land legislation should precede coercion. Labouchere wished to amend the Bill so that tenants who were unable to pay or whose rent was excessive would be protected. Broadhurst, the only laborite present, told the House that although his heart was with the Irish, his head was with Gladstone and that he, "relying upon statesmen who have never yet failed," would vote with the government. On this occasion, only one British member voted with the Irish, Bradlaugh.

After leave to introduce the Bill was granted, Gladstone moved that the Bill should have precedence over all other business. The Irish members applied their obstructionist tactics, but found in the division not a single British supporter. The two laborites present, Broadhurst and Burt, voted with the government.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd series, vol. 257, pp. 803 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1209 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1485 *et seq.*

In the subsequent stages of the Bill, Alexander Macdonald.<sup>1</sup> spoke four times in opposition to the government. On the Second Reading, he criticized the figures of Forster; he believed that they were collected by the Irish Constabulary whose sympathies were with the landlords. The Bill, he thought, might kill the Land League but could not prevent the formation of secret and more dangerous associations; it might drive the Irish people out of their country, only to settle in America where they would harbor their ancient grievances against Great Britain. In the committee, Macdonald attacked the retroactive feature of the Bill and demanded the exclusion of women from its provisions. On the Third Reading, he delivered a final protest. The Bill, he said, would suppress the liberties of a whole people on account of the action of a few: it would leave the people of Ireland, including women and children, at the mercy of the informer, the spy, and the paid partisan. Neither of the other two laborites spoke on the Bill, but Broadhurst voted with the government while Burt voted with the Irish.

On the second coercion bill, introduced immediately after the first had been passed, authorizing the police to search for fire arms, the laborites repeated each his stand on the first bill. Neither was there any change when the third bill was before the House of Commons in 1882, except that Broadhurst this time criticized severely the clause relating to intimidation and sought to protect the freedom of Irish trade unions.

The Land Act of 1881 granted the familiar three F's—fair rent, fixity of tenure, and free sale of tenant rights. It also enlarged the Bright clauses of the Act of 1870, increasing the loan of the government from two-thirds to

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol 258, pp. 202-204, 717, 1323, 1797-1799.

three-fourths of the purchase money. The Act was well received by the Irish members. All the laborites supported it, with only a criticism from Macdonald on the clause encouraging emigration to Canada

The remaining years of the second Gladstone administration were comparatively free from Irish controversy. The short ministry of Salisbury which followed was marked by the absence of coercion and the passing of the so-called Ashbourne Act. The Act, though carrying an appropriation of only five million pounds, inaugurated the new policy of the government's advancing to the tenant the entire sum of the purchase money, to be paid in forty-nine annuities equivalent to four per cent. of the capital. The annuities proved to be smaller than the rents. The Act was supported both by the Irish and by the laborites

Home Rule became an issue of primary importance in British politics in 1886, when Gladstone for the third time became Prime Minister. The question of the motives of Gladstone in introducing the Bill need not be considered here. The Bill provided for the establishment of a legislative chamber in Ireland, consisting of two orders, which was to control all questions affecting Ireland alone. The Irish members were to withdraw from the imperial Parliament. The Home Rule Bill, as is well known, split the Liberal Party. The only aspect of the split which has a bearing on this study was that the Liberal Party did not divide between the Whig wing and the Radical wing. Whigs like Lord Hartington and Radicals like Joseph Chamberlain and Jesse Collings, who had been opposed to each other on many questions of domestic and foreign policy joined to form the Liberal Unionist group. John Bright, a close associate of Gladstone for many years and one of the first to call the attention of the British public to the Irish land situation, threw his powerful influence to the

Unionists. On the other hand, Whigs like Lord Rosebery and Radicals like Labouchere supported Gladstone. The laborites, who on most occasions had acted with the Liberals, especially with the Radical Liberals, all joined the Gladstonian group on the Home Rule question.

The Home Rule Bill was introduced<sup>1</sup> on April 8th, 1886, and was defeated on the Second Reading on June 7th. On April 11th, Thomas Burt (laborite) told the House that he had always been a Home Ruler. He recognized the importance of the criticisms of Chamberlain but he thought it was impossible to find an alternative scheme which would be satisfactory to the Irish. If the Bill should be defeated, he would urge the government to appeal to the country, for he believed that the working classes would support Gladstone. Two days later, Joseph Arch (laborite) assured the government that the rural workers preferred Home Rule to coercion. In May, during a debate on the Second Reading, Charles Fenwick (laborite) declared that whatever the House of Commons might decide in regard to the Bill, the government must under all circumstances stand firm, "for it (the Bill) has the sympathy of, and it will ultimately receive emphatic endorsement by, the great and growing democracy of this country."

The Bill was defeated by a vote of 311 to 341. All of the eleven laborites were present at the division and all voted for Home Rule.<sup>1</sup>

In the general election following the defeat of Gladstone, the laborites issued a manifesto to the "sons of toil and artisans of England." It appealed to the working classes to support Gladstone, "the hero of a hundred fights, the champion of Liberty, of the people's cause and public peace," rather than Lord Salisbury, "the upholder of class privilege

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 304, pp. 1318-1371, 1482-1483; vol. 306, pp. 83-87.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 306, pp. 1240-1243.

as opposed to popular rights, the enemy of your recent franchise, the coercionist and would-be exterminator of millions of horny-handed sons of toil from their Motherland to make way for flocks and herds.”<sup>1</sup>

2. 1886-1892.

The general election in the summer of 1886 returned the Conservatives to power with a large majority. For six years, they governed Ireland with land bills and coercion bills. Both these questions were prominent in the first general debate of the new Parliament. Parnell moved an amendment,<sup>2</sup> criticizing the land policy of the government. Any system of state assistance in the purchase of land on the basis of rents fixed when prices were higher was, he claimed, a disguised scheme to tax the people of the United Kingdom for the benefit of the landowners. George Howell<sup>3</sup> (laborite), supporting the amendment, urged the government to take immediate measures for relief in the coming winter. Unless this were done, he was afraid there would be more evictions and with evictions more crime. He would support the government in any legislation to help the tenants but he objected to all measures which put money into the pockets of the landlords. The amendment was defeated by a vote of 181 to 304. All the laborites were in the division and all voted with the minority.

Three days after the Parnell amendment had been defeated, Sexton (Nationalist) moved a resolution<sup>4</sup> in the House of Commons, asking the Crown to assume direct responsibility for restoring order in Belfast. The resolution

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Humphrey, *A History of Labor Representation* (London, 1912). p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 3rd series, vol. 308, pp. 382 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 496-498.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 991 *et seq.*



was, in effect, an attack on the methods of the Irish Constabulary. Five laborites were in the division, all voting with the Nationalists and Liberals. On the next day, Labouchere moved a vote of censure<sup>1</sup> on Lord Randolph Churchill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for using language against the Irish which might excite disturbances. Lord Randolph Churchill, Labouchere quoted to the House, had asked by what title the nationalists claimed to represent the people of Ireland. The titles of the Italian, Greek, and Bulgarian nationalists were won on the field of battle but this was not the case with the Irish. Fenwick (laborite) spoke in support of the motion and three other laborites joined him in the division.

On September 12th, 1886, the Nationalists introduced a private bill for the temporary relief of tenants.<sup>2</sup> The bill provided for the reduction or cancellation of arrears of rent. All but one of the laborites were in the division on the Second Reading, voting with the Nationalists and Liberals.

As the activities of the Land League brought on the coercion laws of W. E. Forster, so the "Plan of Campaign" of 1886 was the immediate occasion of the coercion laws of the Conservative government. The "Plan" was for the tenants on any estate, where abatements of rent had been refused, to combine and to pay the rents into a common fund, to be held in reserve for the maintenance of evicted tenants or for payment to the landowners whenever they should decide to accept reductions. The Speech from the Throne in January, 1887, mentioned the introduction of coercion measures. Parnell met it with an amendment,<sup>3</sup> stating that agrarian crimes arose only where rent

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., pp. 1228 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 309, pp. 159 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 310, pp. 774 *et seq.*

was not equitably adjusted and that the solution of the Irish question lay, not with coercion, but with reforms of the government of Ireland. All the laborites attended the division and all supported the amendment.

On March 22nd, the government moved for precedence of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill over all other orders of the day. Morley (non-laborite) moved a direct refusal of the government's demand.<sup>1</sup> Again, the laborites went with the Opposition. This action was impressively repeated on the First and Second Reading, in the committee, and on the Third Reading of the Bill, a process lasting from March to July. Fenwick and Rowlands joined the debate at various times.

In September, the Trades Union Congress, on the first day of its sessions, suspended the standing orders to consider a resolution, protesting against the suppression of a meeting in Ennis (Clare). The action of the government was characterized as "worthy only of the most despotic and vile governments of the world." A representative of a Belfast trade union moved an amendment, asserting the necessity of maintaining law and order in Ireland, preliminary to redress of grievances. The amendment was voted down by 7 to 85; the original resolution was then passed by 85 to 1.<sup>2</sup>

About the same time, Gladstone moved in the House of Commons an address to the Queen, protesting against the proclamation of the Viceroy of Ireland which declared the Irish National League to be a dangerous association. Eight laborites were present in the division, all voting with Gladstone.<sup>3</sup>

Through the remaining years of the Conservative gov-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 312, pp. 1158 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 20th Congress*, pp. 18-21.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard, 3rd series, vol. 319, pp. 1827 *et seq.*; vol. 320, pp. 149 *et seq.*

ernment, protests against coercion were presented to the House of Commons in every session: in 1888, Parnell in February and Morley in June; in 1889, Morley in February and Sexton in July; in 1890, Parnell in February. On all these occasions, the laborites were present in relatively large numbers and always voted with the Nationalists and Liberals. In 1890, the Trades Union Congress again passed a resolution censuring the activities of the Irish Constabulary.

In the winter of 1888, the government moved for leave to introduce a land bill. It called for the the appropriation of five million pounds to be advanced to tenants for the purchase of land, in accordance with the provisions of the Ashbourne Act of 1885. On the First Reading, Gladstone moved an amendment to the effect that the Land Courts should be authorized to reduce or cancel arrears of rent found to be excessive. On the Second Reading, Labouchere moved for the postponement of the Bill for reasons similar to those of Gladstone. They regarded the measure as one for the relief of landowners rather than for the relief of tenants. The laborites voted on both occasions with the Opposition.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. 1892-1895.

The general election of 1892, resulting in the return of Gladstone to power, was commonly believed to have given the government a mandate to proceed with a Home Rule bill. When Parliament opened in August, Burt, in seconding Asquith's motion of lack of confidence in the Salisbury government, voiced this belief. He held the decision of the country to be clear. The opponents of Home Rule had done their worst to defeat its realization; now, after six years of anti-Home Rule policy and agitation, they had been defeated. They called the Liberals, Burt continued,

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 330, pp. 1522 *et seq.*

separatists and themselves unionists, but as a matter of fact, the Liberals were the true unionists. "We believe," he concluded, "in a Union founded not on rifles and bayonets, but on goodwill and affection, and confidence between man and man and between nation and nation. And the time has come, Sir, when in this democratic country a union on other foundations cannot continue to exist."<sup>1</sup>

The principal difference between the first and the second Home Rule Bill was that the first excluded all Irish members while the second retained eighty Irish members in the imperial parliament. The Bill<sup>2</sup> was introduced in February, 1893; read a second time in April; considered in committee through May, June, and July; reconsidered in the House of Commons in August, and was read a third time and passed on September first. It was rejected by the House of Lords. The laborites supported the second as they had supported the first Home Rule Bill. There was consistent loyal co-operation among the laborites, non-laborite Liberals, and Irish Nationalists. The resultant hatred of the House of Lords was also shared by the three groups.

Shortly after the defeat of the second Home Rule Bill Gladstone retired from the premiership. The Irish question never assumed any importance in the year of Lord Rosebery's ministry.

#### 4. 1895-1905.

During the decade of Unionist rule, the land question and the question of coercion were agitated in much the same way as in the previous six years of Conservative government. As no new light is thrown on the reaction of labor, these questions may be treated summarily.

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 7, pp. 105-111.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, *passim*. For division list, see *Times* (London), September 4, 1893, p. 10.

The question of coercion centered around two points: amnesty to political prisoners and repeal of coercion laws. The former point was raised by amendments to the Address in 1895, '96, '97, and '98; on all these occasions, the laborites voted with the Nationalists and the Liberals.<sup>1</sup> Repeal of the coercion laws was demanded by John Dillon (Nationalist) in 1899 and by John O'Connor in 1905. The action of the laborites on the question of repeal<sup>2</sup> was identical with their action on the question of amnesty.

In 1899, 1901, 1902, the Nationalists pressed the government to pass some land legislation providing for the compulsory sale of land to the tenants. In 1903, the government met the Nationalist demand with the "Wyndham Act", appropriating one hundred million pounds to be advanced to the tenants as purchase money and twelve million pounds as bonus to the landowners who were willing to sell the land. The difference between the Nationalist scheme and the Act was that the former proposed some form of compulsion on the landowners while the latter offered an inducement. The motions of the Nationalists were always supported by the laborites. The Wyndham Act was acquiesced in by both the Nationalists and the laborites. The Unionist land policy was continued by the Liberals in the Land Act of 1909.

Two new questions emerged in Anglo-Irish controversies during the decade. One was the question of the financial relation between Ireland and Great Britain. In 1897, a Royal Commission investigated the subject and reported that Ireland had been taxed out of proportion to her taxable capacity to the extent of three million pounds a year. Once in 1897, twice in 1900, and once again in 1905, the Irish

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 30, pp. 643 *et seq.*; vol. 37, pp. 406 *et seq.*; vol. 45, pp. 123 *et seq.*; vol. 53, pp. 434 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 69, pp. 1541 *et seq.*; vol. 147, pp. 377 *et seq.*

members tried to get the government to remedy the inequality. The laborites voted on this question always in the same lobby with the Nationalists and the Liberals.<sup>1</sup>

During the years of the third Salisbury administration, an attempt was made to satisfy the Irish demand for Home Rule by granting Ireland greater powers in county self-government. The Speech from the Throne in February, 1898, contained an outline of the proposal. John Redmond, leader of the Nationalists, welcomed the proposal but refused to accept it as a definitive settlement of the Home Rule question. Ireland, he said, wanted local self-government, but she desired even more national self-government, which could only be realized by the granting of an independent legislature and a responsible executive. All the laborites, as well as the Liberals, voted with the government to defeat the Redmond amendment. The only British members who voted with the Irish on this occasion were Henry Labouchere and Philip J. Stanhope. Broadhurst, of the laborites, alone expressed his views on the local government scheme. He felt that the measure would delay Home Rule but that it could serve as the foundation for the Home Rule of the future.<sup>2</sup>

That the laborites did not mean to silence the agitation for Home Rule with the Local Government Act of 1898 was shown by their activities in the following year.<sup>3</sup> In the general election of 1900, the laborites generally declared for Home Rule in their electoral campaign. John Burns in particular put Home Rule at the head of his parliamentary program. In a bye-election in 1903, William Crooks also advocated warmly the cause of Home Rule.

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 48, pp. 129 *et seq.*; vol. 78, pp. 1073 *et seq.*; vol. 81, pp. 72 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 53, pp. 371 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> R. C. K. Ensor (editor), *Modern Socialism* (London and New York, 1904), pp. 282, 378.

The Nationalists, fearing that the Local Government Act might delay Home Rule, sought to counteract this tendency immediately after the measure was placed on the statutes. In February, 1899, John Redmond, in an amendment to the Address, attempted to get the House to declare that Home Rule "is and must remain the most urgent of all questions of domestic policy." The laborites, feeling that such a declaration would jeopardize in the first place social legislation, especially old-age pensions, and in the second place Home Rule itself through the alienation of the working classes, refused to support the amendment. In the division, they voted in the same lobby with Balfour, Asquith, Campbell-Bannerman, and Curzon.<sup>1</sup> The one notable exception of all British members in the House was Labouchere.

### 5. 1906-1914.

The decade of Liberal government before the World War was, so far as the Irish question was concerned, very similar to the years of 1892-1895. In both periods, the signal event was a Home Rule Bill. The only difference was that in the earlier period the Bill was introduced at the beginning of the administration, followed by years of inaction; in the latter period, the Bill was preceded by six years of inaction. Several explanations of the delay of the Liberals in introducing a Home Rule Bill have been suggested, such as the large majority the Liberals had in Parliament from 1906 to 1910, rendering them independent of Irish support, dissensions in the cabinet on the question, and the certain veto of the House of Lords. As the motives lying behind the delay are not material to this study, they need not be considered here. The one fact that should be noted is that the Irish Nationalists, under the leadership of John Redmond, never embar-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 66, pp. 1178 *et seq.*

passed the government by pressing Home Rule actively from 1906 to 1910.

The Irish question, however, was not absent from Parliament during those years. In 1906, Colonel Sanderson (Unionist) moved a resolution in the House, declaring that Home Rule would injure the liberties of the loyalist community in Ireland and impair the integrity of the Empire. In 1908, Walter Long, and in 1909, Earl Percy (both Unionists) demanded coercion laws to protect property in Ireland. On all these occasions, the laborites joined the Nationalists and the Liberals to defeat the Unionist proposals.

The third Home Rule Bill, entitled the Government of Ireland Bill, was introduced in the House of Commons by Premier Asquith on April 11th, 1912. The Bill was drawn along the same lines as the second Home Rule Bill in that it retained Irish members in the imperial Parliament, although the number was to be reduced to forty-two. As the veto of the House of Lords had been made only suspensory by the Parliament Act of 1911, the Government of Ireland Bill, in order to meet the requirements of that Act, was pushed through the three successive passages in the House of Commons in 1912, 1913, and the first half of 1914. The action of the laborites on the Bill was identical with their action on the previous Home Rule Bills. Their support was at all stages whole-hearted and entirely at one with the Liberals and the Nationalists. The only discernible difference was that during the consideration of the third Home Rule bill the laborites were more critical and less patient with the Opposition than before. Thus, Ramsay Macdonald,<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party, asserted that the Unionist fear of civil strife in Ireland was entirely unfounded; he believed that if external influences were

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 36, pp. 1454 *et seq.*



really in sympathy with Home Rule, the differences between the north and south of Ireland would soon be healed. Again, John Hodge<sup>1</sup> sought to remove the fear of Catholic intolerance. According to him, there was more tolerance in Dublin than in Belfast; if there was intolerance in Ireland, it was more on the part of the Protestants than on the part of the Catholics. The Trades Union Congress expressed through its president its support of the Bill at the very beginning of the struggle. The presidential inaugural address in 1912 characterized the Irish question as "the great and burning question of the hour." It voiced the hope that Ireland would be given self-government so that the Irish people could develop their own natural resources and "work out their own economic and industrial salvation."<sup>2</sup>

In the spring of 1914, it will be remembered, Sir Edward Carson organized the Ulster Volunteers to resist the application of Home Rule to Ulster. Some of the officers of the British army announced that they would refuse to coerce Ulster. The Labor Party, under the leadership of Macdonald, utilized every opportunity to denounce the insubordination of the officers as well as the Unionist encouragement of it.<sup>3</sup> The Asquith government eventually decided to make a concession to Ulster by permitting individual Ulsterite counties to vote exclusion from the Irish parliament for a term of six years. The concession was accepted by John Redmond and by the laborites.

#### 6. 1914-1921.

When Great Britain declared war on Germany, both Redmond and Carson rose in the House of Commons to

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 46, pp. 2383 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 45th Congress*, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 60, pp. 95-99, 434-441.

pledge their support to the government in the prosecution of the war. The Government of Ireland Act was temporarily suspended. For a while, calm seemed to reign in Ireland. In April, 1916, the Sein Fein rebellion broke out. From 1916 to 1921, we find the British government and Sinn-Feiners engaged in a more or less irregular warfare, with intermittent attempts at a final settlement.

In February, 1916, Ginnell (Nationalist) moved an amendment to the Address, regretting the omission of any mention of Home Rule and of relief from taxation. In the pressure of the war, the motion found no hearing. In March, 1917, T. P. O'Connor (Nationalist) contended in a resolution that the principle of equal rights of small nations for which the Allies were said to be fighting should be applied to Ireland. In face of the overwhelming opposition to the resolution, the Nationalists left the House of Commons in a body in the midst of the debate. After their departure, Lloyd George offered a motion to the effect that no government should be forced on any section of Ireland. It was, of course, a refusal to coerce Ulster. The Labor Party, then under the leadership of Wardle, had no suggestions to make; it contented itself with expressing the wish that another effort should be made at reconciliation.<sup>1</sup>

Later in the year, the Parliamentary Labor Party passed a resolution expressing "its entire sympathy with the Nationalist Party in the repeated postponement of plans intended to realize their national aim."<sup>2</sup> But when John Redmond offered a motion to condemn the repressive acts of the Irish Executive, the labor vote was divided; of the fifteen laborites in the division, eight supported and seven (of whom four were in the government) opposed Redmond.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 91, pp. 481-483.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 16th Annual Conference of the Labor Party*, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 98, pp. 689 *et seq.*

After 1917, the sympathy of the Labor Party with Ireland became more pronounced. From this point on, it is desirable to note exactly what the Labor Party stood for in relation to Ireland and what reservations, if any, it made. In March, 1918, the Executive of the Party urged the government to make another effort to settle the question. Later in the year, in a second Party conference, a comprehensive resolution was passed, stating the principles of the Labor Party for the settlement of the Irish question. Its terms were:

"That the Conference unhesitatingly recognizes the claims of the people of Ireland to Home Rule, and to self-determination in all exclusively Irish affairs: it protests against the stubborn resistance to a democratic reorganization of the Irish Government by those who, alike in Ireland and Great Britain, are striving to keep minorities dominant; and it demands that a wide and generous measure of Home Rule, on the lines indicated by the proceedings of the Irish Convention, should be immediately passed into law and put into operation."<sup>1</sup>

In July, 1918, John Dillon (Nationalist) asked the House of Commons to accept for the settlement of the Irish question the principles of President Wilson as stated by the latter in his speech at the grave of George Washington. Adamson, representing the Labor Party, supported Dillon in a speech in which he pointed to the anomaly of Irishmen fighting for world freedom when they were denied freedom in their own country. With the exception of the labor members in the government and one private member, all the other members of the Labor Party voted with the Nationalists.<sup>2</sup> The same action was taken by the laborites when in

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the 18th Annual Conference of the Labor Party*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Hansard*, 5th series, vol. 109, pp. 85 *et seq.*

November, one week before the Armistice, O'Connor moved a resolution akin to that of Dillon.<sup>1</sup>

The 1918 Trades Union Congress passed without a division the resolution moved by Ben Tillet (Dock and Riverside Workers), which called upon the government to establish in Ireland Home Rule "under the most generous and free conditions of democratic self-government."<sup>2</sup>

Among the first acts of the Labor Party as the principal Opposition after the general election of 1918 was a resolution of censure on the government for its Irish policy. It stated that military repression in Ireland could only further alienate the Irish people from Great Britain and subject British professions in the World War to international suspicion. The resolution, however, was not pushed to a vote.<sup>3</sup> In December, 1919, O'Connor protested against the suppression of the "Freeman's Journal." Adamson, as Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party, supported O'Connor. The motion was defeated by a vote of 52 to 161. Of the fifty-two votes for the motion, twenty-nine came from the Labor Party.<sup>4</sup>

The 1919 Trades Union Congress also protested through a resolution moved by J. H. Thomas (Railwaymen) against the military rule in Ireland and demanded that self-government should be substituted for it.<sup>5</sup>

From the end of December, 1919, to November, 1920, the government was engaged in pushing through the House of Commons another Government of Ireland Bill. The principles of the new measure were stated by Lloyd George to be, first, the safeguarding of the supremacy of the Imperial

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 110, pp. 1962 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 50th Congress*, pp. 291-292.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 115, pp. 1692 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 123, pp. 334-336.

<sup>5</sup> *Report of 51st Congress*, p. 391.

Parliament, and second, the establishment of two parliaments in Ireland, one in Ulster and one in Dublin. Arthur Henderson at once declared the division of Ireland to be unsatisfactory and urged the government to start with the Asquith measure of 1914, leaving the details to the Irish parliament. Such a procedure, Henderson stated, was the nearest approach to self-determination.<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, the Parliamentary Labor Party sent a mission to investigate conditions in Ireland, including Adamson, Clynes, and Tyson Wilson. The report of the mission,<sup>2</sup> endorsed at a joint meeting of the Executive and the Parliamentary Labor Party on February 26th, 1920, first criticised the military rule in Ireland. "By the police and the military the people are treated as a conquered race, whose attitude towards their conquerors entitles them to no mercy or forbearance." The report turned to the economic conditions of Ireland. It declared that the country was "in a state of economic arrest:" mining was not developed although Ireland had coal mines; canals were neglected; sea fisheries were discouraged. It believed that with the resources and population of the country its poverty was an economic anomaly. As to the solution of the problem, the mission recommended alternative schemes: either an immediate grant of a full Dominion status or the convocation of a constituent assembly to determine the form of government, both on condition that minorities would be protected and defence and foreign relations be reserved for the imperial government. Finally, the mission declared that complete separation of Ireland from Great Britain was beyond the range of practical politics in view of British and Ulsterite prejudices.

Throughout 1920, the laborites devoted much attention

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 123, pp. 1208-1209.

<sup>2</sup> *Times* (London). February 26, 1920, p. 16.

to Ireland inside and outside of Parliament. In March, the government moved the Second Reading of the Government of Ireland Bill. J. R. Clynes, on behalf of the Labor Party, moved its postponement for six months, objecting to the "partition" of Ireland, that is, the establishment of two parliaments. The motion was defeated by a vote of 94 to 348, the Labor Party contributing 42 of the 94 affirmative votes.<sup>1</sup> In the committee stage of the Bill, Asquith offered an amendment to drop the second parliament at Belfast. Fifty-five votes were cast in favor of the amendment, of which number thirty-four came from the Labor Party.<sup>2</sup> On the Third Reading, Adamson, as spokesman for the Labor Party, again moved the postponement of the Bill. After attacking the partition feature of the Bill, he advocated for the solution of the Irish problem one of the recommendations of the labor mission, the convocation of an Irish constituent assembly. He urged the government to withdraw immediately all British forces from Ireland and to repeal all coercive measures. He would only make two conditions to the constituent assembly, the protection of the minority and imperial control of defence and foreign relations. Although he recognized that there was considerable sentiment in Ireland for an independent republic, he believed it was largely due to the heat of the agitation. At all events, he thought that Great Britain would be justified by the very doctrine of self-determination in preventing Ireland from becoming a military and naval menace. The motion of Adamson found fifty-two supporters, of whom twenty-five were members of the Labor Party.<sup>3</sup>

The other measure which was passed by Parliament in 1920 for the government of Ireland was a coercion bill, cal-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 127, pp. 944-955.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 129, pp. 91-138.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 134, pp. 1413-1419.

led the Restoration of Order in Ireland Bill. From the First to the Third Reading of the measure, the Labor Party took the initiative in opposing it and furnished the bulk of the votes in the Opposition lobby.<sup>1</sup> In October, the Labor Party made another effort against coercion in the form of a vote of censure moved by Arthur Henderson. The motion protested against the indiscipline of the armed forces of the Crown, resulting in the death or injury of innocent citizens and the destruction of property, and demanded an independent investigation "into the cause, nature, and extent of reprisals." In support of the vote of censure, Henderson cited a long array of statistics of repression in Ireland: in 1917, arrests for political offences, 349; sentences for political offences, 269; attacks on meetings of unarmed people, 36; deportations without trial, 24: in 1919, arrests for political offences, 1000; raids on private dwellings, 4000; meetings suppressed, 300; newspapers suppressed, 25; towns sacked, 32.<sup>2</sup> In spite of these figures, the motion was defeated by a vote of 79 to 346. The laborites and the Independent Liberals constituted the opposition minority.

Outside of Parliament, the Labor Party Conference and the Trades Union Congress were energetic in championing the cause of Ireland. The presidential address at the Party Conference asserted that Ireland must be given perfect freedom to choose her own form of government and that the essential condition of such a free choice was the complete withdrawal of British military forces.<sup>3</sup> The resolution the Conference passed on Ireland called for self-determination "without any military, political, or economic pres-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 132, pp. 2689-2808.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 133, pp. 926-934.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of 20th Annual Conference of Labor Party*, p. 113.

sure from outside, or any reservation or restriction imposed by any government."<sup>1</sup>

In July, a special congress of labor organizations was called to deal with the Irish (and Russian) question. In addition to the political demands, which were similar to those embodied in the resolution of the Labor Party Conference, the congress recommended to its constituent organizations a "down tools" policy in case the government refused to comply.<sup>2</sup> Later, the regular Trades Union Congress protested in vigorous terms against the decision of the government to allow the Lord Mayor of Cork, MacSwiney, to die. The resolution concluded by reminding the government "that such blind stupidity will render reconciliation between Ireland and England almost impossible."<sup>3</sup>

The final agreement between the British government and Sinn Fein was concluded in December, 1921, after protracted negotiations. The Articles of Agreement, which were to usher in the Irish Free State, placed the government of Ireland on the same basis as that of the Dominion of Canada. Of the other provisions of the Agreement, only four need be noted here. The Irish Free State gained complete fiscal autonomy. It obtained the right of providing for coastal defence and for the protection of customs revenue and sea fishery. On land, the Free State could maintain defensive forces bearing the same numerical proportion to British forces as the population of one country bears to that of the other. Ulster was allowed one month to choose between inclusion in and exclusion from the Free State; in case the choice was for exclusion, the boundary between the two countries was to be determined by three

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 20th Annual Conference of Labor Party*, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 52nd Congress*, p. 88.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.



commissioners, one appointed by the Free State, one by Ulster, and the third by the British government.

The Articles of Agreement were submitted to Parliament for acceptance on December 14th. The attitude of the Labor Party towards them may be indicated in the words of J. R. Clynes, who spoke as the representative of his party: "Let it be said frankly that the Articles of Agreement are a victory for an enduring national spirit over every obstacle and every form of force which that spirit has had to encounter for centuries."<sup>1</sup> They were passed by the House of Commons by a vote of 401 to 58, all the members of the Labor Party voting for acceptance.

The record of the reaction of the laborites to British imperialism in Ireland bears a meaning too explicit to call for an extended analysis. Broadly speaking, the laborites, throughout the past forty years of Anglo-Irish controversy, acted in the House of Commons in close alliance with the Irish representatives in the House. Before 1916, the laborites entered the alliance in company with the Gladstonian Liberals; after 1916, the Labor Party was the principal ally of Irish nationalism in Great Britain. During the forty years, the laborites parted company with the Irish representatives only on two occasions: once in 1898, when the laborites accepted and the Irish rejected the scheme of county self-government, and again in 1899, when the Irish demanded that the House of Commons should consider the Irish question the most urgent of domestic policy, a demand which the laborites refused to accept. On both these occasions, the Gladstonian Liberals also refused to support the Irish. So far as the action of the laborites was concerned, it seems apparent that their refusal to vote with the Irish was dictated entirely by considerations of political

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 149, p. 18, *et passim*.

tactics and not by unwillingness to help win the claims of Ireland.

Before 1916, the record of the Liberal Party on the Irish question can be said to be the record of the laborites, except on the question of coercion. The Forster coercion laws were a great disappointment to the laborites. Alexander Macdonald attacked them in the most vigorous fashion; Burt always voted against them; Broadhurst supported them half-heartedly, more from loyalty to Gladstone than from belief in their merit, and not refraining from criticism of particular features. Probably, the unanimous support of the first Home Rule Bill by the laborites in face of the opposition of men like John Bright should be considered a merit from the anti-imperialistic point of view.

How much the laborites contributed to the solution of the Irish question is hard to determine. It is, however, more a matter of leadership in Parliament than a matter of policy. Before 1916, the laborites in Parliament did not make, far less carry out, any constructive suggestion towards the settlement of the Anglo-Irish struggle. They were overshadowed by the larger number and probably also by the abler leadership of the Liberals. It should be noted that the Trades Union Congress was more active on the Irish question than on the Indian and the African questions. It should further be noted that so far as the Irish question was concerned there was no division in the laborite ranks; no distinction was discernible between the trade-unionist wing and the socialist wing. If the Congress and the laborites in Parliament can be accepted as representative of the world of organized labor in Great Britain, it can be said that British labor has preserved through the last forty years the earlier sympathy of the chartists for the cause of Ireland and that British labor has since 1916 been the largest single factor in Great Britain to fight for the rights of the Irish people.

## CHAPTER V

### LABOR AND GENERAL IMPERIALISTIC MOVEMENTS

THE questions which have been treated so far present two aspects of primary interest to the student of imperialism. They can be viewed as struggles between Great Britain and the several native populations. Also, they can and should be considered as steps in the general contest for empire between the British government and the governments of other colonial powers. In Egypt, Great Britain fought the Egyptians and at the same time resisted the jealousy and obstruction of France. In Bechuanaland, the natives caused less anxiety than the ambitions of Germany and of the South African Republic. In Rhodesia, Great Britain resorted to an ultimatum to put an end to Portuguese claims. India has been called, and with much reason, the pivot of British foreign policy. Ireland has been more of a local problem than the other areas brought under British rule, but even Ireland has had effects on Anglo-American and Anglo-German relations.

While British imperialism in India, in Africa, and in Ireland has had an important repercussion on general world politics, that imperialism has had in each case a peculiarly regional purpose. Thus, the British policy in India has been to guard India as a part of the empire. The questions which remain to be dealt with are questions which arose out of general ends, without particular reference to the mineral resources, the commercial market, or the investment field of any one region. They arose partly from the repercus-

sion in Europe produced by the extra-European regional imperialisms and partly from intra-European conflicts. Historically or incidentally, some of these questions have had a regional bearing, but judged from the point of view of consequence, their primary significance has been general. They include the alliances—the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the triple Anglo-French-Russian entente,— the agitation for an imperial preferential tariff, armament competition, and the World War.

The distinction between regional and general imperialism will serve, with the necessary qualifications, to emphasize the general European and world significance of the questions at hand. That the intense armament competition in the two decades before the World War had a general meaning is obvious; so far as Great Britain was concerned, it was entered into as insurance for the whole empire and its position in the world. Imperial preference was advocated both as a measure for giving an advantageous position to home industries in the home market, the empire being the “home,” and as a measure for drawing the various units of the empire closer through commerce. The World War, both in its operations and in its settlement, was not confined to a particular region. The Anglo-French Entente was based on a number of regional accommodations, but its functions transcended the settlement of any of the original territorial disputes between Great Britain and France. The importance of Persia in the politics of the Anglo-Russian Entente gives it more of a regional meaning, but the general European aspect of the Entente overshadowed the question of the independence of Persia. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was restricted by its text to the Far East, but the Far East was and is a world problem and the Alliance was devised to meet new world conditions.

Side by side with these general imperialistic movements in

the decades before the World War, there were a number of general anti-imperialistic movements,<sup>1</sup> such as the Hague Peace Conferences and the agitation of national and international peace societies.

In this chapter, the part of Great Britain in the diplomatic groupings will be considered. The chapter following will be devoted to the agitation for imperial preference, armament competition, and the peace movement. The World War will be treated by itself in a third chapter. In the following as in the preceding chapters, the main interest of this study is not in these questions themselves but in the reaction of British labor to them.

#### A. DIPLOMATIC GROUPINGS

##### 1. *Anglo-Japanese Alliance*

The world situation which led Great Britain to sign the Anglo-Japanese Alliance can be indicated in the words of Mr. G. P. Gooch:

"The international position of Great Britain on the eve of the Boer War was not altogether satisfactory. France smarted under the wound of Fashoda, the United States remembered Venezuela, and our embittered rivalry with Russia had been recently extended to the Northern coasts of China. And now the prolonged struggle in South Africa intensified existing enmities and created new ones. . . . The conversations that took place between France, Germany, and Russia while our armies were engaged overseas have never been officially disclosed. . . . Though nothing came of them, the subtler rumblings left behind them a certain alarm, and created a subconscious feeling that it was dangerous for us to move through a crowd of scowling or averted faces without a single powerful friend. . . . The first step

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, pp. 168-172.

on the path that led away from isolation was the Anglo-Japanese treaty, signed in January, 1902."<sup>1</sup>

The preamble to the treaty declared that the two powers were solely actuated by a desire to maintain "the territorial integrity of the Empire of China and the Empire of Korea," and to secure "equal opportunities in those countries for the commerce and industry of all nations." The gist of the Alliance lay in the first article: "Having in view, however, their special interests, of which those of Great Britain relate principally to China, while Japan, in addition to the interests which she possesses in China, is interested in a peculiar degree politically, as well as commercially and industrially, in Korea, the High Contracting Parties recognise that it will be admissible for either of them to take such measures as may be indispensable in order to safeguard those interests if threatened either by the aggressive action of any other power, or by disturbances arising in China or Korea, and necessitating the intervention of either of the High Contracting Parties for the protection of the lives and property of its subjects." The remaining articles provided that in case either of the two powers should be involved in a war in defence of its interests in China or Korea, the other would maintain neutrality if the war was fought against one power, but join its ally if the war was fought against two or more powers.<sup>2</sup> The treaty was renewed in 1905, when India was included in its scope and armed assistance was provided in case of war with a single power. In 1911, it was modified to obviate armed assistance in a war with a power with which the second ally had a treaty of arbitration.

<sup>1</sup> G. P. Gooch and J. H. B. Masterman, *A Century of British Foreign Policy* (London, 1917), pp. 44-45.

<sup>2</sup> John V. A. MacMurray, *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China* (New York, 1921), vol. i, pp. 324-325.

The effects of the treaty are a matter of controversy. Some of them are, however, clear. It was under the shadow, if not the protection, of the treaty that Japan annexed Korea and enlarged and consolidated her interests in Manchuria. The game of international competition in China was regulated by a series of Open Door agreements, under which each power was to pursue its own interests without excluding those of others; under the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the two powers recognized each other's special interests and promised mutual aid in realizing them. Finally, the Alliance enabled Great Britain to lessen its naval garrison in the Pacific, and to concentrate it in European waters.

During the twenty years of its existence, the Alliance was formally considered by the House of Commons only once. Shortly after its conclusion in 1902, Norman (non-laborite) moved the adjournment of the House to question the policy of the Alliance.<sup>1</sup> Sir William Harcourt, then leader of the Liberal Opposition, thought it endangered Great Britain's position in Central Asia. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman declared it unnecessary because existing agreements were sufficient to maintain the Open Door in China. No laborite took part in the debate.

Japan annexed Korea in 1910. The only notice the House of Commons took of the annexation was a debate initiated by the Earl of Ronaldshay in June, 1911. He pointed out that Japan would not have annexed Korea if she had not been assured of British acquiescence, for which he thought the government failed to get fair compensation. Japan, by annexing Korea, could send her goods to that country without paying tariff, thus handicapping British merchants. The assurance from Japan that she would not alter the tariff for ten years seemed to him insufficient;

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 102, pp. 1272 *et seq.*

Lord Salisbury, in acquiescing in French action in Tunis, exacted from France such an assurance for forty years.<sup>1</sup> No laborite expressed his opinions on the question.

It was originally intended to devote a chapter to the reaction of British labor to British imperialism in the Far East. Labor, however, has almost ignored that region; whatever need be said can be said in a few sentences. In the Chinese crisis of 1898-1900, the laborites took no cognisance of British participation in the partition movement as represented by British seizure of Wei-hai-wei and Kowloon or of the British share in the Boxer indemnity. In 1909, labor took no action when Great Britain "sabotaged" the Knox plan for the neutralization of Manchurian railways. On the loan negotiations between Yuan Shih Kai and the Quadruple Group, the C. Birch Crisp and Company of London, and later the Six Power Consortium—negotiations which contributed largely to the conflict between Yuan Shih Kai and the Chinese Parliament, the laborites had nothing to say. The Chino-Japanese struggle in 1915, centering around the Twenty-one Demands, was the cause of many questions<sup>2</sup> in the House of Commons, addressed by private members to the government. Tootill (laborite) wished Sir Edward Grey to relieve the uncertainty in the Far East for the benefit of the trade of Lancashire. Philip Snowden (laborite) persisted in asking Grey if the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, supposed to aim at the maintenance of the integrity of China, was to be used by Japan, without a protest from Great Britain, for aggrandisement. At the Paris Peace Conference, China created a minor crisis on the question of Shantung. British labor made no pronouncements on the whole struggle either dur-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 27, pp. 153 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 71, pp. 980 *et seq.*



ing the negotiations or at the time of the ratification of the Versailles Treaty,<sup>1</sup> although the British government was partly responsible for the Shantung decision of the Conference through its pledges to Japan in 1917.

## 2. *Anglo-French Entente*

The Anglo-French Entente of 1904 settled a number of outstanding questions between the two countries: Newfoundland fisheries, tariff in Madagascar, boundaries of Guinea and Gambia, and, above all, Egypt and Morocco, France recognising England's special position in Egypt and England in return recognizing the French claims in Morocco. The real significance of the agreement did not lie in these specific settlements. In the words of Professor Seymour: "For Great Britain, oppressed by the fear of Germany, the liberation of France (i. e., of the traditional French enmity) was of the utmost advantage, because it lessened the chance of success in what was believed to be the great German 'design.' So long as Germany held the hegemony of the Continent there was always possible the creation of a continental league against the British Empire, which would revive the perils of the Napoleonic age. The Entente with France, as a step in the restoration of the continental balance and the breaking down of German primacy, offered the best defence of Britain's maritime empire against the German menace."<sup>2</sup> On the part of France, particularly in the mind of Delcassé, her Foreign Minister, the Entente had an undoubted anti-German meaning. And this, Germany knew well.

The agreement came before the House of Commons in June, 1904. Sir Edward Grey congratulated the Balfour

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, pp. 207-208.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Seymour, *The Diplomatic Background of the War: 1870-1914* (New Haven, 1916), p. 158.

government, particularly for the method of dealing directly with the powers when negotiating about backward countries, and expressed the hope that the same method would be employed in regard to Persia and China. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Sir Charles Dilke joined in the congratulations. The only criticism voiced was by private members of the Unionist party, on the ground that British interests had not been well guarded.<sup>1</sup> The laborites showed no interest whatever in the agreement.

On the face of it, the agreement was a pacific instrument, concerning only Great Britain and France, the independence of Morocco being guaranteed. The secret articles, which gave France the greater part of Morocco in case its independence could not be maintained, were not published till the second Moroccan crisis in 1911. The test of the agreement and of the reaction of the laborites to it could come only from the concrete acts inspired by it, which followed in 1905-'06 and 1911.

As regards the first Moroccan crisis, we need only state that Great Britain at first supported France in refusing an international conference and that during the Algeiras Conference, the British government was, in the words of Campbell-Bannerman, then Prime Minister, "giving the French Government all the diplomatic support in our power." Although the holding of the conference was, in a sense, a French diplomatic defeat, its results were highly favorable to France. The House of Commons, including the labor members, did not question the wisdom of British support of France.

In the first week of October, 1905, *Le Matin* published an account of the resignation of Delcassé. It stated that the Foreign Minister, in support of his policy towards Ger-

<sup>1</sup>Hansard, 4th series, vol. 135, pp. 499 *et seq.*

many, told his colleagues in the cabinet that Great Britain was ready to support France even to the extent of mobilizing the British fleet to seize the Kiel Canal and of landing an army in Schleswig-Holstein. Some years later, *Le Figaro* revealed, in connection with the first Moroccan crisis, that Berteaux, the Minister of War, thought the army was unready and that Rouvier, the Prime Minister, felt that a military agreement with Great Britain would be regarded by Germany as exclusively directed against her and would seize it as a *casus belli*. These revelations about the fall of Delcassé and the promises of British military support to France evoked no specific questions in the House of Commons; the laborites, with the rest, took no interest in them.

The second Moroccan crisis, it will be remembered, was caused by the French expedition to the capital of Morocco and the counter dispatch of a German gunboat to Agadir. The first overt act on the part of the British government was the speech of Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the Mansion House banquet, on July 21, 1911. The speech warned Germany that Great Britain could not be excluded from negotiations which involved British interests; it regarded such exclusion as humiliating to "the great and beneficent position" of Great Britain.<sup>3</sup> The *Journal des Debats* described the speech as worth at least as much as the dispatch of a cruiser.

Asquith, on July 27th, made a formal statement to the House of Commons on the Franco-German negotiations. After endorsing the speech of Lloyd George, he declared that Great Britain as a signatory of the Algeciras Act, as a friend of France, and as a power with important interests in Morocco, had the duty of claiming participation in the Franco-German negotiations. Ramsay Macdonald, as

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Register*, 1911, p. 182.

Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party, told the government that organized labor would stand for peace under all circumstances and deplored the language of the Mansion House speech. "That statement has been the basis of a Press campaign which everybody must regret."<sup>1</sup>

In November and December, 1911, Sir Edward Grey, as Foreign Minister, moved that the House of Commons should consider the foreign policy of the government. The debate which followed<sup>2</sup> was the longest which the House held during the decade of Liberal administration before the World War on the general foreign policy of Sir Edward Grey. At this point, only the Anglo-French aspect of it need be noted. In his opening speech, Grey stated that Great Britain had great interests at stake in the Moroccan negotiations. He was afraid that Germany might seize Agadir to make it into a naval port. He wished to fulfil the contractual obligations of the entente. He considered "splendid isolation," the only alternative to the entente policy, to be impossible; "it would deprive us of the possibility of having a friend in Europe, and it would result in the other nations of Europe, either by choice or by necessity, being brought into the orbit of a single diplomacy, from which we should be excluded." Ramsay Macdonald, Keir Hardie, and Charles Duncan spoke from the labor benches. Macdonald declared that the continuity of foreign policy, valued so much by Grey, should not be regarded as an immutable canon; that the tone of Grey, while friendly to Germany, could have been more so; that he held to his criticism of the Mansion House speech. Hardie, too, regretted that Grey had not been more cordial towards Germany in the speech, for Germany was about to renew her Naval Law and the coldness of the British government was

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 28, pp. 1827 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 32, pp. 43 *et seq.*

bound to cause an increase in German naval construction. Duncan made a plea for peace.

It will be seen that the speeches of the laborites were very general. A reading of the whole debate discloses the fact that such non-laborites as John Dillon and Sir Henry Norman were far more outspoken, detailed, and vigorous in their opposition to the foreign policy of the government.

Labour's criticism of the Anglo-French Entente was, however, not limited to these specific occasions, although they were of the greatest importance in the pre-war days. The Entente was a part of the general policy of Britain, which, as will be seen in the following sections, was opposed by the laborites on some points.

### 3. *Anglo-Russian Entente*

The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, like the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904, was based on a number of territorial settlements: Tibet, Afghanistan, and Persia. The most important of them was the division of Persia into three zones: the northern zone being made the Russian sphere of influence, the southern British, and the middle neutral. Important as was the question of Persian independence and Persian oil, the Anglo-Russian Convention, as a part of the anti-German policy of Great Britain, was even more significant. As M. Lemonon expressed it, the Convention was meant in a measure to intimidate Germany and to place another obstacle in the march of Germany to world hegemony.<sup>1</sup> To Russia, the new Entente was a source of strength in the struggle between Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism in the Near East.

The Speech from the Throne in 1907 announced the Anglo-Russian Entente. Arthur Henderson, on behalf of

<sup>1</sup> Ernest Lemonon, *L'Europe et la politique britannique* (Paris, 1910), p. 444.

the Labor Party, spoke on the first night of the debate. He touched on a number of subjects, but did not express any opinion on the new Russian policy of the government.<sup>1</sup> Later in the debate on the Address, Earl Percy moved that the Convention was unsatisfactory because it involved great British sacrifices without clearing all the misunderstandings between Russia and England.<sup>2</sup> No laborite participated in the discussion.

A part of the British policy of rapprochement with Russia was the exchange of visits between the King and the Tsar. In June, 1908, James O'Grady (laborite) moved the reduction of the salary of the Foreign Secretary to censure the state visit of the King to Russia.<sup>3</sup> He explained that Great Britain had free institutions which Russia did not have and that the British people could not mix "in bad company" without being contaminated. The motion was defeated by a vote of 59 to 225, the Labor Party contributing 30 ayes and 5 noes. In the following year, the laborites took similar action to express their disapproval of the reception of the Tsar in England. On this occasion, the Trades Union Congress passed a resolution of censure, which was in many ways unusual. Its terms were:

"This Congress, representing the organized workers of Great Britain, expresses its deep sympathy with the Russian people in their continued struggle for political liberty and the right of true constitutional government; it protests against the British government concluding agreements without first consulting the people of this country, and quite regardless of the abhorrence felt by the British people for the blood-stained Tsardom. It further protests against the Tsar being received in his official capacity by the British

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 183, pp. 116 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 184, pp. 460 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 190, pp. 211 *et seq.*

Government until the cruel persecutions of his subjects are stopped, and this Congress hereby repudiates any responsibility on the part of the organized workers of Great Britain in the invitation or reception tendered to him.”<sup>1</sup> The resolution and the speeches supporting it made one point clear: British workers, as represented by the Congress, censured any help that the British government might give, directly or indirectly, to the reactionary government of Russia in its internal affairs. So far as it went, this attitude of British labor towards the Entente was admirable; and Russian liberals, who protested against the French loans and the French prosecution of Russian political refugees in France, could not fail to appreciate the more liberal position of British labor. The resolution and the speeches, however, entirely ignored the possible effects of the Entente on British and Russian external relations and through them on general European politics. The Convention was, on its face, a pacific instrument, settling a number of Anglo-Russian differences. Its real import was only shown by the subsequent acts inspired by it.

The first demonstration of the reality of the Triple Entente in European diplomacy was in connection with the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria in 1908. Russia demanded an international conference to review the action of Austria; Great Britain and France supported Russia while Germany stood by Austria. The question came before the House of Commons in July, 1909, when Sir Charles Dilke moved a reduction of the salary of the Foreign Secretary for his support of Russia. Dilke contended that the annexation of the two Turkish provinces by Austria had been informally conceded by Disraeli at the Berlin Congress of 1878. He feared that the action of

<sup>1</sup>*Report of 42nd Congress, p. 131.*

Britain would lead to a solidifying of the Triple Alliance. He felt that the danger for Great Britain was, as in the previous century, the reversion to the policy of the balance of power. Dillon told the House that British talk of peace with Germany was preposterous so long as Britain pursued the policy of forming a European alliance against Germany. For the Labor Party, Henderson and Hardie spoke, not, however, on the Balkan question, but on the visit of the Tsar. The motion of Dilke was negatived by a vote of 79 to 187, the Labor Party contributing 22 ayes and 2 noes.<sup>1</sup>

The Convention of 1907 having given to Great Britain and Russia each a sphere of influence in Persia, the two powers proceeded to consolidate their positions in that country. The first step was a joint note to the Persian government, stating that the two powers would object to concessions being granted to any other power, which might be detrimental to British or Russian political and strategic interests. This step had two results: it excluded Germany from the exploitation of Persia: it also made it impossible for Persia to borrow from any source other than British and Russian. Internal disturbances, due partly to the interference of the two powers and partly to the nationalist party, were utilized by Britain to place British officers in charge of policing the southern zone and by Russia to send troops to occupy the northern zone. Persia turned to America for help and employed W. M. Shuster to reform its finances. Shuster acted on the theory that the Anglo-Russian Convention had no legal validity for Persia. At the demand of Great Britain and Russia, Shuster was dismissed in December, 1911.

In January, 1911, in the debate on Address, Ramsay MacDonald expressed his concern for the fate of Persia. He

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 8, pp. 621 *et seq.*



objected to the free hand Britain was giving to Russia. He believed that the two powers had made it impossible for Persia to meet their own demands for the protection of person and property.<sup>1</sup> In March, Dillon and Ponsonby (non-laborites) attacked the Persian policy of the government.<sup>2</sup>

In the general debate on foreign policy in November, to which allusion has been made, both Macdonald and Hardie paid considerable attention to the Persian problem. Hardie criticized the subordination of British policy to Russian policy in Persia. Macdonald developed the same argument and asked, "Is our friendship with Russia of such a character as to compel us to agree to a partition of Persia? . . . Are we bound by our agreement with Russia to support her in the action which she has taken with reference to Mr. Shuster?" In February of the following year, Ponsonby moved an amendment to the Address, censuring the government for failure to take effective steps to preserve the independence and integrity of Persia. O'Grady from the labor benches spoke briefly for Persian nationalism.

Another aspect of the Persian problem, which is characteristic of the imperialism of the period, remains to be considered. In 1891 and 1892, through the intervention of the British government, the Imperial Tobacco Corporation of Persia obtained an indemnity of half a million pounds for the abrogation of certain concessions. Cunningham Graham (laborite), throughout the first half of 1892, pressed the government to declare the grounds on which the indemnity had been obtained. He knew that the Corporation had spent some money in securing the concession; he wished to know if any of the expenditure was for the good of Persia. It appeared to him that the money had been spent "in 'squaring' the Persian officials."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 21, pp. 95 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 23, pp. 633 *et seq.*

The question of Persian oil became acute in the years before the World War. In 1914, the British government asked for parliamentary permission to buy shares of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, to the extent of two million pounds. Ramsay Macdonald opposed the demand. He felt that commercial concessions, especially with government money in them, had the unfortunate knack of becoming territorial concessions. If any of the native tribes should disturb the pipelines, the Company would impose a fine on them and the government would help the Company to collect the fine. The result was a military expedition. Macdonald, however, failed to convince even his fellow-laborites, for they all voted with the government.<sup>1</sup> Persian oil has the sinister aspect which Macdonald pointed out; it has also the further complication of being coveted by other nations than Great Britain, a phase of the problem which he did not consider.

A close study of the debates on Persia in the House of Commons shows that such non-laborites as Dillon and Ponsonby were far more realistic in their understanding of the Persian problem. It also shows that the protests of the independent Liberals and laborites appreciated only one side of the question, namely, Persian independence and its relation to the defence of India; the other side, the exclusion of German enterprise from Persia and its relation to general European politics, was almost entirely ignored.

#### 4. *The Bagdad Railway*

In Morocco and in Bosnia-Herzegovina, British imperialism conflicted with German imperialism only indirectly. In connection with the Bagdad Railway, the conflict was direct. A consideration of the question of the Bagdad Rail-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, 5th series, vol. 63, pp. 1131 *et seq.*

way serves two purposes in this study. It will illustrate the working of the diplomatic groupings; for the Railway threatened British interests in the Near East and the safety of British India, as well as Russian hopes in regard to Constantinople and French ambitions in Syria and Asia Minor. It will also give us an opportunity to consider labor's reaction to the direct anti-German aspect of British diplomacy and British popular sentiment in the decade before the World War.

The attitude of the British government towards the Bagdad Railway was succinctly stated to the House of Commons by Balfour in 1903, when he was Prime Minister:

"A copy of the convention, concluded March 5, 1903, between the Turkish Government and the Anatolian Railway Company is in our possession. It leaves the whole scheme of railway development through Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf entirely in the hands of a company under German control. To such a convention we have never been asked to assent, and we could not in any case be a party to it. The alternative arrangements, which have lately been under our consideration were, on the contrary, designed to place the railway, including the existing Anatolian Railway, throughout its whole length from sea to sea, under international control and to prevent the possibility of any preferential treatment for the goods or subjects of any one country. In these arrangements it was suggested, *inter alia*, that equal powers of control, construction, and management should be given to German, French, and English interests. After careful consideration of these proposals, his Majesty's Government have come to the conclusion that they do not give to this country sufficient security for the application of the principles above referred to; and they have therefore intimated that they are unable to give the suggested assurances with regard to the policy which they

might hereafter adopt as to the conveyance of the Indian mails by the projected route, as to the facilities at Koweit, or as to the appropriation of a part of the Turkish customs revenue in aid of the contemplated guarantee.”<sup>1</sup>

The negotiations between the German and the Turkish governments for the railway concession began in 1898. The British government in 1899 secured a pledge from the Sheik of Koweit that he would not make any territorial concessions to any power without British consent. This enabled the British government to control “the facilities at Koweit,” a control which was never relinquished in all the subsequent negotiations on the Bagdad Railway. In opposing the increase of Turkish tariff for the purpose of the kilometric guarantee of the Railway, Great Britain was supported by both of her associates, France and Russia. The third form of opposition named by Balfour, the conveyance of Indian mails by the Railway, was also maintained. A fourth form, which Balfour did not name, was the refusal of the British government to give governmental protection to British investments in the project, a refusal which seriously hampered the building of the Railway. In this, the British government was joined by the French government, although French capitalists invested without governmental sanction.

The question of the Bagdad Railway was the subject of a debate in the House of Commons in April, 1903. No laborite participated. Germany, having failed in the negotiations, proceeded to build the line without the co-operation of Great Britain and France. In 1911, German progress had become so notable that acute apprehensions were aroused in England in regard to British interests in Mesopotamia and in the Persian Gulf. Colonel Yate (non-

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Register*, 1903, p. 107.

laborite) moved a reduction of the salary of the Foreign Secretary to censure his supposed failure to protect British interests.<sup>1</sup> The laborites took no part in the debate but voted with the government. Shortly after, the Earl of Ronaldshay again raised the question in a debate on a finance bill, calling attention to a new factor, the agreement between Russia and Germany for the building of a branch line to Teheran.<sup>2</sup> Dillon and Ponsonby took the opportunity to protest against the Persian policy of the government but had nothing to say on the Bagdad Railway. Labor again abstained from expressing any opinion. In 1913, Grey told the House that Great Britain abandoned all opposition to the building of the line from Bagdad to Basra, but held to the control of Koweit and demanded two directors on the board of the Railway.<sup>3</sup> On this occasion, also, labor expressed no opinions.

The importance of the Bagdad Railway in both German and British *Weltpolitik* can scarcely be exaggerated. The policy of the British government did not go to the extreme of using positive means to stop the project, as was desired by men like Colonel Yate. It was rather the use of such passive means as Britain already possessed in "sabotaging" German success. It succeeded in delaying the progress of construction and in robbing the line of its natural terminus. The laborites suggested no alternative policy; they seemed to ignore the problem or to accept the government policy as satisfactory.

The Bagdad Railway was probably the chief concrete instance of the conflict of policy between Germany and Great Britain in the decade preceding the World War. On this, the laborites had nothing to say. Did they adopt any

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 22, pp. 1292 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 23, pp. 623 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 53, pp. 389 *et seq.*

general attitude towards the anti-German aspect of British policy and British sentiment as a whole?

At the 1905 Trades Union Congress, the Parliamentary Committee submitted a resolution, which, after congratulating President Roosevelt for his part in the Russo-Japanese peace and King Edward VII for the French treaty of 1904, declared that labor in Great Britain desired to have the same relations with Germany as with France, that British labor would exert its influence on the government for the reduction of armaments, and that both German and British workers should co-operate to check the jingoist feelings on both sides of the North Sea "for the good of all workers internationally."<sup>1</sup> The Labor Party Conference in the following year passed a resolution similar in nature but more explicit in terms. It also expressed gratification for the better relations with France. It condemned "the attempts which have been made to use this good understanding with France as a threat against Germany, and assures the German people that the British labor movement will resist every effort made by Jingo and interested parties to involve the two countries in war." It hoped that the entente cordiale might be the first step in a general international understanding leading to disarmament. It believed that this could only be secured by the success of the labor and socialist movement in all industrial countries.<sup>2</sup>

In 1908, there was a panic in England about the secret progress of German naval armament. The Labor Party condemned the panic and suggested an exchange of visits between German and British labor bodies. In 1909, Robert Blatchford, editor of the socialist *Clarion*, published a series of articles in the *Daily Mail*, depicting German war preparations and imputing the aims of the extreme German

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 38th Congress*, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 6th Conference*, p. 62.

Anglophobes to the German government. The Executive of the Labor Party immediately disavowed and condemned the views of Blatchford.<sup>1</sup>

At the end of January, 1911, there was held a conference on disarmament, at which Ramsay Macdonald presided. In his presidential address, Macdonald stressed the primacy of policy over armament. He told the conference that the Foreign Secretary was really the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Minister of War combined. It was therefore necessary that the Labor Party should, besides demanding reduction of armament, work out a consistent foreign policy.<sup>2</sup> A week later, in a speech on Address, Macdonald elaborated on this point. "The fact of the matter is," he declared, "that, until Germany and ourselves come to a better understanding than we have yet reached, it is almost waste of words to talk about diminishing armaments. . . . First of all, we must cease all these irritating and pettifogging criticisms regarding German economic advance. . . . We had better in a scientific and calm frame of mind regard that, than constantly lose our heads, lose our tempers, . . . and engage in foolish, windy, and cant phrases about Germany the enemy. In the second place, we have to make up our minds to come to a closer political understanding with Germany regarding certain outstanding questions, like, for instance, Germany's position, both political and economic, in Asia Minor."<sup>3</sup>

At the time of the second Moroccan crisis in 1911, the Trades Union Congress passed another resolution of amity with Germany, associating itself with the sentiments expressed by German workers at a previous demonstration on behalf of peace. Thomas Burt, speaking for the resolution,

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 10th Conference*, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 11th Conference*, p. 112.

urged the workers to discard racial and national prejudices and to realize "that God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell together in amity."<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1912, the Labor Party Conference considered at some length Anglo-German relations. Two resolutions<sup>2</sup> bearing on the subject were passed. One was to the effect that there was no quarrel between the peoples of the two countries and that all labor bodies in Great Britain should simultaneously move resolutions of fraternal greetings to the German people. The other, moved by Keir Hardie, passed a general judgment on the foreign policy of Sir Edward Grey. Its terms are very significant and deserve to be quoted in full:

"That this Congress, believing that the anti-German policy pursued in the name of the British Government by Sir Edward Grey to be a cause of increasing armaments, international ill-will, and the betrayal of oppressed nationalities, protests in the strongest terms against it. The Conference is of opinion that this diplomacy has led the present Government to risk war with Germany in the interests of French financiers over Morocco, to condone the Italian outrage in Tripoli, the Russian theft in Mongolia, and above all, to join hands with Russia in making an assault on the national independence and freedom of Persia. It places on record its deepest sympathy with and support of the Persian people, and calls upon the Labor Party in Parliament to fight for a reversal of the present foreign policy." In support of the resolution, Hardie declared that he had no love for the Russian or the German government, but that of the two he preferred the German. W. C. Anderson seconded the resolution. He believed that the policy of Sir Edward Grey was based on the idea of isolating Germany and of

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 44th Congress*, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 12th Conference*, pp. 98 et seq.



forming a combination of France, Russia, and Italy against the Germanic powers. This, he said, was shown by the fact that whenever Germany made an advance in the colonial world, Great Britain at once objected, but when Italy, Russia, and France made territorial acquisitions, Great Britain not only acquiesced but even helped.

In 1913, the Executive of the Labor Party recommended that Anglo-German relations should form the chief topic of discussion at the May demonstrations and suggested a draft resolution to be considered on that occasion, copies of which were to be sent to the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary. The resolution condemned the competition in armaments and asserted that the interests of the working and commercial classes were not bounded by national boundaries and that a war would inflict a lasting injury upon both Germany and Britain. It demanded that all differences between Great Britain and Germany should be settled by arbitration.<sup>1</sup>

On the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and on British imperialism in general in the Far East, British labor has had no reaction either through its parliamentary representatives, the Trades Union Congress, or the Labor Party Conferences. The significance of this will be pointed out in the concluding chapter in connection with similar questions.

As regards the Anglo-French entente, one is inclined to criticize the naïveté with which British labor welcomed the agreement, even to the extent of congratulating King Edward VII for his pacific labors. In the fourteen years before the World War, the European situation was such that British friendship with any one of the continental powers would inevitably be regarded as British enmity towards other continental powers. Such an evaluation of

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 13th Conference*, p. 27.

the labor reaction to the Anglo-French Entente is, however, one-sided, because it overlooks two important facts. In the first place, the agreement was, on the face of it at least, a pacific instrument, aiming to improve Anglo-French relations. And secondly, before the Entente was concluded, Great Britain was just as likely to get into a war with France as with Germany. The suddenness and the completeness of the accord between the two traditional colonial rivals appealed naturally to the peace-loving and non-imperialistic classes in England. The record of labor in connection with the Entente must be judged, not by labor's first reaction, but by its reaction to the subsequent developments.

The first Moroccan crisis, in which Great Britain supported France, called out no decisive reactions from the laborites in Parliament. It led the Trades Union Congress to pass a resolution of good-will to the German people, a resolution which was, however, barren because it showed no appreciation of the political effects of British support of France. The Labor Party Conference did exactly what the Congress failed to do, for it condemned the attempt to use the entente cordiale as a threat against Germany.

The second Moroccan crisis showed a change in the reaction of the Parliamentary Labor Party and of the Labor Party Conference but not of the Trades Union Congress. The latter body again contented itself with sending fraternal greetings to the German people. In Parliament and in the Party Conference, Hardie and Macdonald led a vigorous attack on the government. The inaction of the other laborites was, however, very noticeable. They did no more than to acquiesce in the work of Macdonald and Hardie.

When the Anglo-Russian Convention was concluded, all the labor leaders acted together and vigorously against any fraternization between the British King and the Russian Tsar, fearing that such fraternization might imply British

approval of Russian illiberal policies at home. The Parliamentary Labor Party and the Labor Party Conference also condemned in strong terms the treatment of Persia by the two allies. No labor leader, however, made any contribution to the question of Bosnia-Herzegovina or to the question of the Bagdad Railway—questions which formed the core of the conflict of imperialisms in the Near East.

The sum of labor reaction to British imperialism as expressed in British diplomacy in the decade before the World War may be said to be a strong effort to counteract anti-German sentiment in England on the part of all labor leaders and a fairly vigorous criticism of the anti-German policy of the government on the part of a few labor leaders, notably Keir Hardie, Ramsay Macdonald, and W. C. Anderson.

## CHAPTER VI

### LABOR AND GENERAL IMPERIALISTIC MOVEMENTS

(*Continued*)

#### B. IMPERIAL PREFERENCE

IN opening the colonial conference of 1887, Lord Salisbury declared, "The desire for colonial and foreign possessions is increasing among the nations of Europe. The power of concentrating military and naval forces is increasing under the influence of scientific progress."<sup>1</sup> Lord Salisbury might have added that the foreign trade of Great Britain was beginning to feel the keenness of German and secondarily of American competition. These considerations for the political, military, and commercial future of the empire created great anxiety in England in the 'eighties, and led to the rise of three interrelated movements—imperial federation, imperial defence, and imperial preference. The promoters of imperial federation were not agreed as to means; one scheme after another met with opposition either on the part of some of the political leaders in Great Britain or on the part of the colonies. The movement was gradually put in the background. Imperial defence was achieved partly by the greater exertions of Great Britain and partly by the efforts of the colonies themselves. The movement for imperial preference finally became the chief object of imperial agitation, since it was felt by some that trade was after all the best bond of empire.

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Register*, 1887, p. 127.

The movement for imperial preference was further complicated by the tariff situation in the colonies. Before 1873, Great Britain had prohibited all inter-colonial tariffs. After the repeal of the provision in 1873, Canada and Australia "indulged in a regular carnival of unlightened protection against everybody." In the 'eighties, a group of publicists—Earl Grey, Roper Lethbridge, Lord Dunraven, T. Gibson Bowles—arose to advocate a preferential tariff within the empire, limiting protection to foreign goods. They pointed out that unless this was done the empire would naturally disintegrate.<sup>1</sup>

The idea did not become an issue in practical politics until 1903, when Joseph Chamberlain resigned the colonial secretaryship to devote himself entirely to imperial preference. By that time, Canada and Australia had granted reductions of tariff in favour of goods from the United Kingdom. It was felt that the mother country was standing in the way of knitting the empire closer through trade. From 1903 to the beginning of the World War, Chamberlain and his followers kept up a vigorous campaign for an alteration of the fiscal system of the United Kingdom in order to adopt imperial preference.

On February 8th, 1904, John Morley initiated the first of a long series of fiscal debates in the House of Commons. Morley moved an amendment to the Address, declaring that any change in the free trade policy would be injurious to the welfare of the nation.<sup>2</sup> Richard Bell (laborite), supporting the amendment, pointed out what seemed to him to be the irony of the situation: advocates of free trade and of protection were equally concerned with the welfare of the working classes. If he was entitled to speak for the

<sup>1</sup> A. L. Burt, *Imperial Architects* (Oxford, 1913), pp. 137-146.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 129, pp. 623 *et seq.*

workers, he would say that they were overwhelmingly against any change in the fiscal policy of Great Britain. Arthur Henderson (laborite) told the House that a preferential tariff was not even the way to help the manufacturers, let alone the workers. To his mind, what actually hampered British trade was the excessive mining royalties and railway rates. A reform of these matters would help the manufacturers without penalizing the workers. In the division on the amendment, the laborites all voted with Morley.

In the same year, Pirie<sup>1</sup> (non-laborite) in March and Campbell-Bannerman<sup>2</sup> in August moved resolutions censuring the sponsoring of the tariff agitation on the part of cabinet ministers. On both occasions, the laborites supported the Liberals. In the following year, Winston Churchill proposed a motion to the effect that the permanent unity of the empire could not be secured through a preferential tariff.<sup>3</sup> Twelve laborites were in the division, all voting with the Liberals.

In the first general debate after the election of 1905, Frederick Maddison (laborite) rose to express the opposition of labor to imperial preference. He believed that one moral of the defeat of the Unionists was the distrust which the working classes entertained for the policy of Chamberlain. "No one could be in public life," he told the House, "without being deluged by proposals for remedying unemployment; but of all the mad proposals, those with the least reason in them were the proposals associated with the right honorable Member for West Birmingham. . . . The unemployed could not be helped except by something which increased the general wealth of the country."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 131, pp. 652 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 139, pp. 284 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 142, pp. 805 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 152, pp. 299 *et seq.*

In March, 1906, Sir James Kitson moved the first anti-preferential tariff resolution under the new Liberal government. Philip Snowden, speaking for the Labor Party, advanced probably the most reasoned argument against any departure from the traditional free-trade policy of Great Britain. He wanted the Unionist opposition to explain how it was that while wealth had increased employment and wages had decreased. He knew that free trade was limited as an active force in the distribution of wealth but he believed that free trade was a necessary condition to greater equality of wealth. America had protection, but American wages had not increased while the cost of living had increased from 25 to 50 per cent. Certain classes of German workmen enjoyed good wages, but that was in spite of protection. Rent, railway rates, and mining royalties, continued Snowden, were the sources whence money for social reform might be secured. The laborites combined with the Liberals to pass the Kitson resolution.<sup>1</sup>

Thus far, all the fiscal debates had been initiated by Liberal anti-preference resolutions. After 1906, these annual debates were brought about by motions for preference moved by the Unionists, motions now setting forth one reason and now another for a change in the free trade policy of Great Britain. In 1908, Goulding moved that a preferential tariff in favour of the colonies would stimulate the production of food in those countries and thus render the empire more self-sufficient.<sup>2</sup> The laborites voted against this plea as they had against others.

In February, 1909, Austen Chamberlain moved for a preferential tariff, "which would promote the growth and stability of our home trade, provide means for negotiating for the mitigation of foreign tariffs, and develop our over-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 153, pp. 949 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vol. 185, pp. 774 *et seq.*

seas trade."<sup>1</sup> Labor turned a deaf ear to these new arguments. In March, Captain Craig moved for protection on the sole ground of retaliation against foreign tariffs.<sup>2</sup> To this, labor also refused to listen.

In 1910 and 1911, Austen Chamberlain, in his motions for imperial preference, advanced two new arguments.<sup>3</sup> One was that a preferential tariff would bring the workers back to the soil. Ramsay Macdonald characterized the argument as simple pretense. The other argument was that unless the mother country changed its fiscal policy, it would endanger the preferential treatment which the colonies had given to British goods. This also failed to move a single member of the Labor Party.

The last attempt before the World War for a preferential tariff was made in February, 1914, when Captain Tryon offered a resolution calling for a moderate tariff of 10 per cent, ad valorem on foreign manufactured goods alone. The grounds on which the resolution was offered were: "(a) to safeguard the stability of British productive industries against the attacks of artificially stimulated foreign competition, and (b) to increase the national revenue and so make funds available for the assistance of agriculture and purposes of social reform." Labor, as usual, was solid against any change in the free trade policy.<sup>4</sup>

Outside of Parliament, both the Labor Party and the Trades Union Congress made energetic efforts to combat the agitation of Joseph Chamberlain. In 1898, R. Jones of Manchester proposed at the Congress a resolution demanding the sending of a deputation to the Board of Trade to arrange aid to "industries whose decline is due, directly

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 1, pp. 237 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 257 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 14, pp. 252 *et seq.*; vol. 21, pp. 293 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 58, pp. 671 *et seq.*



or indirectly, to unfair competing imported foreign manufactured goods." In support of the motion, Jones argued that while he had consideration for foreign workers, he did not forget that self-preservation was the first law of nature. He wished the Congress first to protect home industries and then to care for those abroad. Appleton declared that the motion aimed at a simple protective tariff. It was rejected by the Congress.<sup>1</sup>

The 1903 Leicester Congress made the tariff question one of the principal items of the agenda. W. H. Hornidge, in his presidential address, considered the subject at some length. He conceded that the ideal of knitting the imperial race together was a magnificent one, but he doubted if the object could be accomplished by artificial trade conditions. He did not wish the British people to tax themselves for the benefit of their offspring in Canada and Australia until it was known what Great Britain could get in return. The resolution the Congress passed condemned the policies of Chamberlain as "most mischievous and dangerous" and called on all labor bodies to exert themselves to prevent a change in fiscal policy. The official report of the Congress states that the resolution was "carried by an overwhelming majority amid a great volley of cheering, only two hands being held up against."<sup>2</sup>

After the Congress, the Parliamentary Committee started a wide agitation in the country against a preferential tariff. It issued a monthly leaflet to the trade unions, each issue numbering fifty thousand copies, dealing with various aspects of the tariff question. The titles of some of the leaflets are significant: "The Curse of Protection," "Mr. Chamberlain's Modern Fallacies," "Mr. Chamberlain's Un-

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 31st Congress*, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 36th Congress*, pp. 39, 61.

redeemed Pledges," "Indirect Taxation and Protection," etc., etc.

The tariff resolutions of the 1904 and 1905 Congress, after pointing out the unjust incidence of a protective tariff, added "that a system of Preference or Retaliation, by creating cause for dispute with other countries, would be a hindrance to international progress and peace."<sup>1</sup> The resolution in the 1905 Congress was passed by a vote representing 1,253,000 against 26,000 constituents. At that Congress, Samuel Woods, the Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee, officially repudiated the Trade Union Branch of the Tariff Reform League.

The action of the Labor Party Conferences was parallel to that of the Trades Union Congress, except that the resolutions of the former included more economic theory. The 1904 Conference is typical. The resolution proposed at the Conference first pointed out that a protective tariff would enable the landlord class to collect a heavier toll from the nation and would encourage the growth of trusts and other forms of monopoly. It acknowledged that the condition of the working classes was bad enough under free trade but asserted that it would be worse under protection. It claimed that true protection for British industry could only come from reform of the landlord system, from education, and from a decrease of railway charges and mining royalties. To the resolution, an amendment was proposed by a representative of the Operative Printers Association to the effect that a preferential tariff alone could protect British industry. It was argued that had there been protection there would not have been the annual import of paper to the extent of five million pounds. The Conference first defeated the amendment by a vote representing 965,000

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 37th Congress*, p. 95; *Report of 38th Congress*, pp. 135-137.

against 27,000 constituents and then passed the main resolution unanimously.<sup>1</sup>

In the 1909 Conference, J. R. Clynes, in his presidential address, sought to refute some of the arguments of the tariff reformers. He believed that artificial trade conditions could do nothing to strengthen the bonds of empire but might do something to weaken them. Since foreign countries were Britain's best customers, the greater their prosperity the greater would be their demand for British products. Great Britain could not and should not expect them to pay for her social reforms. He asked the Conference to observe that the patrons of tariff reform included the most pronounced enemies of social progress.<sup>2</sup>

The Labor Party Executive also published a number of tariff leaflets. The most notable of them were nos. 33 and 34, showing that unemployment was as common in protected Germany and protected America as in free trade England.

The record of British labor on the question of tariff has been therefore consistently against protection in any form for any purpose whatsoever. In all the debates and divisions in the House of Commons on the question, not a single labor speech or vote throughout the years of the tariff agitation was on the side of protection. In the Trades Union Congress as well as in the Labor Party Conference, the overwhelming majority has always stood for free trade; both organizations have, furthermore, combated the agitation for protection through energetic executive action. Protective tariff, advocated on whatever ground—whether as a measure of curing unemployment, as a means of securing the funds for social reform, as a way of knitting the empire together, as a method of stimulating the production of

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 4th Conference*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 9th Conference*, p. 58.

food in the colonies and thereby increasing the self-sufficiency of the empire, or as a measure of retaliation and a lever in negotiating with foreign countries—has found no favor whatever with British labor.

### C. ARMAMENT COMPETITION

#### 1. *Navy*

Armament competition was one of the most outstanding characteristics in the conflict of imperialisms in the two decades before the World War. In the case of Great Britain, the emphasis was on the navy, although the army was not neglected. The increase in British naval estimates were first directed against France and Russia; in the twentieth century, they were almost entirely directed against Germany. The following table of the naval estimates of the three leading European naval powers will furnish a convenient background for the study:<sup>1</sup>

	<i>Great Britain</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>France</i>
1895-'96 .....	£18,701,000	£4,318,125	£10,821,640
1896-'97 .....	21,823,000	4,372,068	10,637,096
1897-'98 .....	21,838,000	5,584,870	9,485,895
1898-'99 .....	23,778,400	5,972,594	11,485,326
1899-'00 .....	26,594,500	6,485,797	12,082,627
1900-'01 .....	27,522,600	7,461,364	12,597,661
1901-'02 .....	30,875,500	9,629,670	13,107,697
1902-'03 .....	31,255,500	10,234,068	12,271,947
1903-'04 .....	34,457,500	10,887,182	12,538,858
1904-'05 .....	36,859,681	11,428,500	12,517,273
1905-'06 .....	33,151,841	12,409,200	12,722,752
1906-'07 .....	31,472,087	13,270,100	13,001,488
1907-'08 .....	31,419,500	13,625,503	12,486,792
1908-'09 .....	32,319,500	16,603,444	12,797,303
1909-'10 .....	35,142,700	19,594,566	13,353,824
1910-'11 .....	40,603,700	21,247,588	13,659,820
1911-'12 .....	44,392,500	21,095,932	16,654,621
1912-'13 .....	44,085,400	22,008,746	16,931,149
1913-'14 .....	48,809,300	23,041,904	18,687,045
1914-'15 .....	51,550,000	23,444,129	19,818,052

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Brassey's *Naval Annual* and the *Statesmen's Yearbook*.

The figures show that British naval expenditure doubled in the ten years of Unionist government, from 1895 to 1905, declined in the first four years of Liberal government, and increased rapidly in the last six years before the World War. German naval construction was almost insignificant till the present century, during the first fourteen years of which it took two jumps, first in 1900 and then in 1908. France spent more than half the British amount in 1895, a ratio not reached even by Germany in 1914; French naval expenditure, however, remained almost stationary till 1911. To these facts, it should be added: that Great Britain built in the last year of Balfour's premiership the first dreadnought, a ship larger than the Kiel Canal could have accommodated then; that Germany at once enlarged the Canal and started building ships of the new type; that Great Britain was enabled by her diplomatic understanding to withdraw part of her naval forces from the Pacific and the Mediterranean, and to concentrate them in the North Sea, and that under Campbell-Bannerman the British government made a serious effort to secure reduction of naval armament at the Second Hague Conference but refused to discuss the immunity of private property at sea in time of war.

Before 1895, there were three important naval debates in the House of Commons. The first one occurred in 1888, when the government asked for an appropriation of two million six hundred thousand pounds for fortifying ports and coaling stations. The laborites strongly opposed the demand. W. R. Cremer asked the government to tell the House who the enemy was. He was sure that British nervousness came from British expansion and British meddling in the internal affairs of other countries. Cunningham Graham contended that the money, if spent in assisting the poor and the unemployed, would have made the

country much stronger than if spent in building battleships or forts and that under the social conditions of his day the workers really did not care whether they were under the rule of Prussia or Austria or France. The House granted the appropriation, the laborites voting in opposition although some of the Liberals, including Campbell-Bannerman, went with the government.<sup>1</sup>

The second debate<sup>2</sup> was by far the most important of the three. The Speech from the Throne in February, 1889, stated that the increasing expenditures for armament on the part of other European powers necessitated Great Britain's taking greater precautions for the defence of the country and its commerce. The proposals of the government, made by Lord George Hamilton, the First Lord of the Admiralty, involved not only a large increase, but a new principle of naval expenditure, namely, the provision of a shipbuilding program spreading over a number of years. On this occasion, the laborites and the Liberals also failed to agree. The Liberals criticised only the new principle of an extended program. Gladstone, for example, declared that although the increases seemed large, he was not ready to oppose the government because it might have information which he did not possess. He only doubted the soundness of the mode of providing for the expenditure. Campbell-Bannerman took the opportunity to tell the House that he favoured the two-power standard, that in view of Britain's insular position, its vast commerce and colonial empire, it was absolutely necessary that the British fleet should be equal to the combined strength of any other two fleets in the world.

From the labor benches, both Cremer and George Howell

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd series, vol. 326, pp. 1094 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vols. 334, 336, *passim*.

criticized not only the program of the government but the weakness of the Liberal opposition. They contended that the expenditure was unnecessary and that the new program, dispensing with annual votes in Committee of Supply, was unconstitutional.

Childers, on behalf of the Liberal opposition, moved an amendment, attacking the feature of an extended program. The laborites voted with the Liberals on the amendment. After it was defeated, George Howell moved the postponement of the Third Reading of the bill. He characterized the government program as "an evil in itself, vicious in principle, and calculated to precipitate an appeal to war." He was supported by two of his fellow-laborites, Fenwick and Rowlands. The former delivered another attack on the acquiescence of the Liberals while the latter, calling himself "the legitimate heir of Richard Cobden," called for disarmament. The opposition of the laborites did not succeed in defeating the bill. The new principle of naval expenditure became regular in the naval estimates of many countries in the twentieth century.

The third debate took place in 1893.<sup>1</sup> Lord George Hamilton, then in Opposition, moved that in view of the large increases of French and Russian naval expenditure Great Britain should at once make a considerable addition to the British navy. Cremer taunted the former First Lord of the Admiralty with having set the example to France and Russia. The laborites voted with the government to defeat the Opposition resolution.

The years between 1895 and 1905 were years of steady increase in the naval estimates. There was, however, no serious opposition in the House of Commons till 1899. In that year, Labouchere moved a reduction in the vote for

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 18, pp. 1771 *et seq.*

men. He found nineteen supporters, of whom one was a laborite, the only one present.<sup>1</sup> In the remaining naval debates of the year, the laborites made various criticisms of detail: Fenwick objected to the bad treatment of petty and warrant officers; Maddison pleaded for better wages for shipwrights; Havelock Wilson thought that the pension for the Royal Naval Reserve should begin at fifty instead of sixty; John Burns objected to the large amounts spent in inspecting armaments furnished by private companies.<sup>2</sup> In July, the Government asked for three million pounds for Naval Works. Edmund Robertson (non-laborite) moved a reduction by one million. Of the laborites, Broadhurst and Maddison spoke in favor of reduction, one fearing that British increases would lead to increases in other countries and the other demanding that the money should be spent for old-age pensions. The motion for reductions was negatived by 95 ayes to 168 noes; six laborites were present, all voting with the ayes.<sup>3</sup>

In the naval debates of 1901,<sup>4</sup> the laborites were divided into two groups. On the vote for men and wages, Broadhurst, Burt, and Fenwick voted with, and Burns and Hardie against, the government. On the appropriation for Naval Works, Burt, Fenwick, and Pickard supported, while Burns and Hardie opposed the government. On the appropriation for shipbuilding, both Broadhurst and Burt, the only laborites present, opposed the government.

The laborite record in 1902<sup>5</sup> was a repetition of the record in 1901. On going into Committee on Supply, Thomas Lough (non-laborite) moved an amendment to the

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 68, pp. 578 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 997 *et seq.*; vol. 69, pp. 1233 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 75, pp. 542 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 91, pp. 1139 *et seq.*; vol. 98, pp. 767 *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 103, *passim.*



effect that growing naval expenditure was imposing undue burden on the taxpayers. The two laborites present, Cremer and John Wilson, both supported the amendment. (Asquith, Grey, Haldane, and Dilke opposed it.) On the vote for men, John Dillon moved a reduction which was also supported by Cremer and Wilson. (Grey and Herbert Gladstone opposed it.) When the vote for wages was called, Dillon again moved a reduction. Four laborites were present, two, Cremer and Wilson, voting with Dillon, and two, Bell and Broadhurst, voting with the government and the Liberals.

In 1903, '04, and '05, the laborites were re-united in naval matters. In 1903,<sup>1</sup> Balfour moved for the creation of a Committee of Defence to co-ordinate naval and military plans. Broadhurst objected to it, fearing that the Committee, with its high authority, would increase expenditure and excite other European nations. On the vote for wages, Labouchere moved a reduction, which was supported by all the laborites present—Burns, Burt, Broadhurst, Cremer, and Shackleton. (Haldane and Asquith opposed reduction.)

At the commencement of the naval debates in 1904,<sup>2</sup> Herbert Roberts (non-laborite) moved that the government should enter into negotiations with other powers for the reduction of armaments. In this, he was supported by Burt, Cremer, Fenwick, and John Wilson. The reduction in the wages vote, moved by William Redmond, was also supported by the laborites present—Broadhurst, Burns, Fenwick, Shackleton, and John Wilson. The laborites co-operated with O'Mara in demanding a decrease in the vote for men and in the vote for Naval Works. In 1905,<sup>3</sup> all the

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vols. 118, 119, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 130, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 142, *passim*.

laborites opposed the government on both the votes for men and for wages.

In 1906, '07, '08, years of decreased naval estimates, no important naval debate took place in the House of Commons. From 1906 to the beginning of the War, we again find the labor members divided on the question of naval armaments.

The reductions in the naval budget, made by the new Liberal government, were well received by the laborites, Keir Hardie alone claiming that they should be even larger. In May, 1906, the Labor Party, through Vivian and Fenwick, moved a resolution, urging the government to place the reduction of armaments on the agenda of the coming Hague Conference. With the support of the Liberals, the resolution was passed.<sup>1</sup>

In 1907,<sup>2</sup> Brace (laborite) declared that he accepted the two-power standard as defined by Campbell-Bannerman. He felt, however, that Britain could reduce her naval budget more and still maintain the standard. Jenkins (laborite) also accepted the two-power standard but opposed any further reduction in the budget, because reductions, he feared, would create unemployment. G. N. Barnes (laborite) disputed the soundness of Jenkins' economic theory.

When the Liberal government proposed a small increase in naval expenditure in 1908, J. M. Macdonald (non-laborite) moved that further reductions should be made. The debate on the motion was very spirited. From the labor benches, J. R. Clynes spoke at length against the government policy. He saw no necessity for any increase: Japan was Britain's ally; France had become friendly; Russia offered no grounds of fear; a war with America was unthinkable; there remained only Germany, and the British navy

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 156, pp. 1383 *et seq.*; vol. 162, pp. 80 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 171, pp. 700 *et seq.*

was certified to be four times as strong as the German navy. The money, he contended, should be spent in social reforms. Twenty-six laborites were in the division on the motion, seventeen supporting and nine opposing it.<sup>1</sup>

The year 1909<sup>2</sup> was a year of great naval agitation throughout the British empire. Germany had passed a new Naval Law. Newspapers in Melbourne and Sidney started a campaign to present the mother country with a dreadnought; New Zealand telegraphed an offer of one or two ships. Canada showed its willingness to co-operate in a naval program. In Great Britain, the Lord Mayor of London summoned a meeting at the Guildhall, at which Balfour spoke and a resolution was passed demanding four more dreadnoughts and pledging the City to financial aid. From the labor ranks, Arthur Henderson in the debate on Address and D. J. Shackleton in the presidential address at the Trades Union Congress deprecated the panic.

The regular naval debates in the House of Commons were begun on March 16th with the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty. He claimed that Germany would have seventeen dreadnoughts in 1912 while Great Britain would have only sixteen. To keep the two-power standard, four more dreadnoughts must be added to the schedule. John Ward (laborite) declared that he thought the government proposal was eminently reasonable. Germany, he said, was building against Great Britain; the British government must take the same precautions for the empire as a private person should for his property. Henderson and Macpherson (laborites) immediately repudiated the views of Ward and warned the government that it "has started on the downward track." The motion of the First Lord of the Admiralty was passed by a vote of 322 to 83. Forty-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 185, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vols. 1-3, *passim*.

three laborites were in the division, of whom thirty-one voted against and twelve for the government. Nine of the twelve, though of trade-union origin, were not elected under the auspices of the Labor Party, leaving only three members of the Labor Party in the government lobby.

In the first vote in the Committee, that for men, G. N. Barnes (laborite) protested vigorously against the proposed increase. He denounced the expenditure as non-productive and in the interest of special groups. Great Britain, he said, was leading the race in armaments. In the face of Germany and America, Britain could not maintain the two-power standard and should abandon it. He suggested that the government should solve the problem of the protection of commerce by exempting merchant vessels from capture at sea during time of war.

The budget of 1909 called for an increase of approximately three million pounds for naval construction. This did not satisfy the Unionists, who, through Arthur Lee (now Lord Lee of Farnham), moved a resolution which, in effect, demanded that eight, instead of four, additional dreadnoughts should be provided. The Labor Party, through G. H. Roberts and J. R. Seddon, strongly supported the government in resisting the Unionist attack. Seddon pointed out that there was no reason for alarm on the part of Great Britain. Japan, France, and Russia were Britain's friends. But Germany, on the other hand, had reasons for alarm. Great Britain had withdrawn to home waters eight battleships from the Mediterranean and two from the Far East. Seddon told the House that in the face of this concentration, Germany reasonably came to the conclusion that there was some design against her. In the division on the Unionist motion, all the laborites voted with the Liberals.

In April, 1909, F. W. Jowett and G. H. Roberts (labor-

ites) moved in the House of Commons "that in the opinion of this House, it should be a principle of naval warfare that enemy merchant vessels, other than carriers of contraband, should be immune from capture." The laborites advocated this doctrine partly on the ground that Great Britain, the leading commercial nation, had more to gain from it than any other nation and partly on the ground that if the doctrine was accepted by Great Britain, Germany could not plead that her naval program was necessitated by her growing commerce. The attempt of the laborites, however, failed.

The year 1909 was a turning point in the Liberal government so far as naval armament was concerned. Between 1909 and 1914, the naval estimates increased by more than sixteen million pounds or nearly fifty per cent. The action of the laborites during those years was a repetition of their action in 1909. The overwhelming majority of the members elected under the auspices of the Labor Party always stood for reduction, while a small majority of the other laborites stood by the government. On the other hand, it should be noted that as the World War approached, the number of non-laborites who opposed the government naval policy diminished. In March, 1914, on the vote for men, there were 217 supporters of the government and only 35 in opposition. Of the 35, 22 were laborites.<sup>1</sup>

Outside of Parliament, the laborites passed annual resolutions calling for disarmament both in the Labor Party Conferences and the Trades Union Congresses. In January, 1911, the Labor Party called a special conference on disarmament. The main resolution bearing on the subject asserted that financial interests alone profited by armament, demanded that all international disputes should be submitted to arbitration, and urged the workers in all lands to act

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 60, pp. 140 *et seq.*

in concert for the cause of international peace.<sup>1</sup> The 1913 Trades Union Congress also passed an anti-militarism resolution which, among other things, "requests the Government to set up a Royal Commission to inquire into the interlocking or financial relationships of the various companies engaged in supplying implements of war to the British Government, with other companies and combines supplying foreign Governments with similar profitable and deadly accessions to national hatred."<sup>2</sup>

The record of labor on the question of naval armament was not so consistent as that on the question of protection or free trade. Two reasons led some of the laborites to accept the government proposals. One was the fear of unemployment resulting from reductions. Another was the fear of Germany. The first reason was prominent in the first several years of the present century; later, it seemed to be abandoned, only to be replaced by the second reason.

The record, however, is really more consistent than it appears. Most of the votes cast in favor of government proposals came from the laborites who were not elected under the auspices of the Labor Party. The overwhelming majority of the regular members of the Labor Party always opposed increases in the naval estimates. It should further be noted that in opposing naval expenditure, labor was more isolated than in opposing imperial preference. In the latter, labor was joined by the Liberals and even by some of the Unionists. On the naval question, labor had to oppose both Liberals and Unionists. During the years of the Balfour ministry, Liberals frequently voted with the government while the laborites, with independent Liberals and Irish nationalists, went into the Opposition lobby. As the World War approached, the isolation of the laborite

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 11th Conference*, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 46th Congress*, p. 337.

stand for reduction of armaments became more and more noticeable.

## 2. *Army*

The action of labor in the field of the army is identical with its action in the matter of the navy. Before 1901, the laborites invariably opposed increases in army expenditure, whether the Liberals opposed them or not. In 1901 and 1902, the laborites were divided on army questions as on navy questions, with the same proportions for and against the government. From 1903 to 1905, the laborites were again united in votes on army matters as on navy matters. From 1906 to the beginning of the World War, the same division in labor ranks in regard to the army appeared as in regard to the navy.

The Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill,<sup>1</sup> introduced by Lord Haldane in 1907, was the most important piece of legislation on the army before the World War. The Bill created a second line of defence with men trained in camps for a limited period each year. On the Second Reading of the Bill, the vote stood 343 ayes and 31 noes, the laborites contributing seventeen ayes and twenty-two noes. Of the laborite supporters of the Bill, only two had been elected under the auspices of the Labor Party.

Only one new issue appeared in the field of the army which did not appear in the matter of the navy, namely, conscription. The Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill of 1907 was thought of by many of the laborites as the opening wedge of conscription. The 1907 and 1909 Trades Union Congress and the 1907 Labor Party Conference protested against conscription, direct or indirect.<sup>2</sup> The protest was directed mainly against discriminations of em-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 4th series, vol. 172, pp. 1691 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 40th Congress*, p. 169; *Report of 42nd Congress*, p. 126.

ployers in favor of workers who joined the training camps under the Bill. Sentiment in both bodies was strongly against a large standing army.

The issue of conscription, however, did not become acute till the World War. The first attempt in the direction of conscription was the National Registration Bill of 1915. On the Second Reading, the division resulted in 252 ayes and 30 noes, with labor contributing nine ayes and seven noes.<sup>1</sup> A year later, conscription became a reality. The Military Service Bill compelled all single men between the ages of eighteen and forty-one to enlist. The Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on January 5th, 1916. The First Reading was passed by a vote of 403 ayes and 105 noes, including nine labor ayes and fourteen labor noes.<sup>2</sup> On the 6th, the Trades Union Congress, the Labor Party, and the General Federation of Trade Unions held a joint meeting to consider the Bill. An anti-conscription resolution was passed by a vote representing 1,998,000 against 783,000 constituents. Another resolution, expressing support of a measure of compulsion "for the purpose of enticing single men of military age to attest under Lord Derby's Group System on condition that adequate Labor Representation is granted on all local tribunals under that scheme" was defeated by an even more decisive majority. The conference can be said to have rejected the Military Service Bill by votes of three to one.<sup>3</sup>

The result of the conference had no effect on the laborites in Parliament. On the Second Reading of the Bill, there were eleven laborites who opposed and thirteen who supported the Bill; on the Third Reading, seven laborites

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 73, pp. 170 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 75, pp. 949 *et seq.*; vol. 77, pp. 1457 *et seq.*; vol. 78, pp. 1038 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Report of 15th Conference*, pp. 5-8.



opposed and nine supported it—proportions at variance with the votes in the conference but in conformity with the votes on the First Reading.

With the exception of the period of the World War, the record of labor on army policy was the same as that on naval policy. The action of the laborites, who favored conscription in 1916, was, however, based not on conscription *per se* but on considerations of the necessities of war. But even during the war, the rank and file of British labor, as represented by the joint conference, refused to accept conscription.

#### D. PEACE MOVEMENTS

During the last forty years, the labor movement in Great Britain associated itself with a number of peace movements initiated by other organizations, besides making efforts of its own on behalf of international peace.

The whole movement in favor of arbitration had the support of British labor. Most of the early laborites in Parliament took great interest in peace and arbitration societies. W. R. Cremer, in particular, was active both within and without labor organizations in promoting peace. He was among the earliest promoters of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and received in 1903 the Nobel Prize in recognition of his services to the cause of arbitration and peace.

The 1887 Trades Union Congress passed unanimously a resolution, thanking members of the United States Congress for taking the initiative in securing an Anglo-American treaty of arbitration.<sup>1</sup> The 1904 Congress sent Pete Curran to attend the International Peace and Arbitration Congress at Boston and asked him to convey to the Congress the fraternal greetings of British labor. The annual congresses of the Peace Association were always at-

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 20th Congress*, p. 47.

tended by delegates of the Trades Union Congress, who regularly reported the proceedings to the Congress.

The Hague Peace Conferences also had the support of British labor. In 1898 the Trades Union Congress congratulated the Tsar for his initiative and called on the British government to co-operate with him.<sup>1</sup> At the time of the Second Hague Conference, labor was insistent that reduction of armaments should be placed on the agenda. When the British government refused to discuss the immunity of merchant vessels at sea in time of war, labor did not hesitate to censure the government. In expectation of the convening of the Third Hague Conference, the Parliamentary Committee of the Congress circulated a "World Petition to Prevent War between Nations." The Petition urged that at the Third Hague Conference, agreements should be concluded among the nations that any change concerning the autonomy and territorial integrity of any nation should be brought about only with the voluntary consent of all nations concerned and that all other disputes should be settled by arbitration.<sup>2</sup>

Labor's independent efforts for peace were directed towards creating an international labor solidarity. A part of the policy took the form of fraternization with trade unions in foreign countries. British labor protested against Russian, German, Spanish, and Japanese repression of trade unions or socialists. It aided Balkan trade unions and German miners on strike. It expressed its sympathy with French miners who suffered from an explosion in the mines of the Pas de Calais. Anti-militarism and peace resolutions were adopted almost annually by the Labor Party Conferences and frequently by the Trades Union Congress.

As the World War approached, labor seemed to redouble

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 31st Congress*, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 45th Congress*, pp. 107-108.

its efforts to create a working-class internationalism. The scene at the 1913 Trades Union Congress was not exceptional. Carl Legien, Secretary of the General Commission of the German Trade Unions, attended the Congress as a fraternal delegate. He pleaded for mutual understanding between Great Britain and Germany. According to the official report, "A scene of remarkable enthusiasm followed the conclusion of Herr Legien's address, the delegates rising *en masse* and cheering lustily for several minutes." The Congress also passed a resolution, which, after pledging British labor to do everything to prevent war, instructed the Parliamentary Committee "to confer with the British Miners' Federation and the National Union of Railwaymen with a view to opening negotiations with foreign trade unions for the purpose of making agreements or treaties as to common international action in the event of war being forced upon us."<sup>1</sup>

The 1912 Labor Party Conference also considered a resolution calling for an investigation of the possibilities of a general strike to stop war. Tom Shaw objected, believing that a general strike in case of a European war could only result in civil war which was worse than a war with a foreign country. The resolution, however, was passed by a vote of 1,323,000 to 155,000.<sup>2</sup>

We know that the general strike did not materialize when war came. At this distance, we are also inclined to censure the naïveté of the promoters of peace and arbitration. We feel that war and militarism are symptoms or results of imperialism, not its root. But in the pre-war days, many men in many lands sincerely believed in the efficacy of their labors on behalf of peace. In this belief, British labor shared. Although British labor was not ahead of other

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 46th Congress*, pp. 257 *et seq.*, p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 12th Conference*, p. 101.

national labor movements in this field, it was, in the British Isles, among the most enthusiastic of the peace promoters.

With the exception of the idea of the general strike, the socialist wing of the Labor Party was conspicuous for its lack of enthusiasm for general movements in behalf of peace and arbitration.

The reaction of British labor to the general imperialistic movements has already been summarized at several points. Here it is only proposed to view it from a more distant vantage-point.

Victorian radicalism, as represented by Cobden and Bright, left behind four ideals—non-intervention, free trade, disarmament, and arbitration. Labor's reaction to the general imperialistic movements corresponded roughly with these four ideals.

As regards the diplomatic groupings, labor, when it reacted at all, asked the government not to support French, Italian, and Russian colonial ambitions in order to form a combination against Germany. Roughly it can be said that labor stood for non-intervention.

As regards imperial preference, labor adhered strictly to the Cobden-Bright ideal of free trade.

In relation to armament, labor was the most insistent of all British political groups in demanding reduction.

In the peace movement, labor never for a moment forgot arbitration.

Labor has not inherited these Victorian ideals without some modification. When labor criticized the policy of Sir Edward Grey, it was not on the ground that Great Britain should have maintained her splendid isolation. It was rather on the ground that British friendship with France and Russia was directed against Germany. Labor would have liked to have the *entente cordiale* serve as the first step in a general European fellowship.

In the field of armament competition, labor also added something in its criticism of the prevailing system. Its plea was not solely on the ground of economy. Indeed, during the decade of the Liberal government before the World War, labor never aimed at reduced budgets. It asked that the money spent for armaments should be spent for social reform. Towards the end of that decade, labor attacked armament competition from another angle. It believed that part of the competition came from parties interested in the profits of munition-making. It asked the government to investigate the interlocking of armament trusts.

The whole struggle of imperial preference was fought on somewhat different grounds from the days of the Anti-Corn-Law League. The advocates of a protective tariff emphasized the ideal of imperial unity. To this new plea, labor opposed new arguments. But in the end, the same ideal of free trade was maintained.

While labor was active in promoting international peace and arbitration along with non-labor agencies, it started a movement of its own, that of labor international solidarity. Such an ideal was, of course, not possible in the days of Cobden and Bright, but the Victorian radicals would hardly have sympathized with anything that had a frankly class basis.

In these four fields, labor succeeded best where Victorian radicalism succeeded best.

The modifications of the Victorian ideals which labor introduced did not crystallize. While labor vaguely championed some kind of European fellowship, it advanced no positive scheme. In opposing armaments, labor met with new temptations which partially dulled the edge of its attack. Its own international ideal had reached only the sentimental stage when the World War came.

It remains to see whether the World War helped British labor to carry the modifications further.

## CHAPTER VII

### LABOR AND THE WORLD WAR

THE general outline of the action of British labor during the World War is well-known. On the field of battle, trade unionists were in no wise different from other British soldiers. At home, labor leaders took an energetic part in the recruiting campaigns; leaders arranged and the rank and file accepted, or at least acquiesced in, the industrial truce, expediting the manufacture of war supplies; leaders joined the coalition cabinets and shared in the conduct of the government and of the war.

The study of the reaction of British labor to British imperialism as manifested in the World War will, therefore, be confined to the subject of dissensions—dissensions in the Labor Party and dissensions between the Labor Party and the government. On the question of neutrality or belligerency, labor leaders were divided; likewise, on the question of a negotiated or victorious peace; in the matter of war aims, labor leaders were at first divided, and when united, were in opposition to the government, and finally, on the peace treaties, labor leaders were completely united and in opposition. Particular attention will be paid to the various reasons which labor advanced for its attitudes on these four questions.

#### 1. *Neutrality or Belligerency*

At the end of July, 1914, the British Labor Party met with the Socialist Parties of Europe in Brussels and voted,

with the others, for peace.<sup>1</sup> On the 29th, Keir Hardie spoke at a demonstration, in company with Jaurès and Vandervelde, expressing the desire for peace. On the following day, the Parliamentary Labor Party passed an emergency resolution, which, after voicing its gratification with the mediatory efforts of Sir Edward Grey, claimed that Great Britain should remain neutral. In its own words: ". . . . It (the Parliamentary Labor Party) hopes, however, that on no account will this country be dragged into the European conflict in which, as the Prime Minister has stated, we have no direct interest, and the party calls upon all labor organizations in the country to watch events vigilantly so as to oppose if need be in the most effective way any action which may involve us in war."<sup>2</sup> On Sunday, August 2nd, Hardie, Ben Tillet, and G. N. Barnes, together with Hyndman, organized a "war protest meeting" in Trafalgar Square, which passed a resolution calling on the government to take every step to secure peace, and on the workers of the world to use their industrial and political power to avert war.

The statement of Sir Edward Grey before the House of Commons on August 3rd was the formal presentation of the case of the British government for war with the Central powers. Sir Edward,<sup>3</sup> it will be remembered, dwelt at some length on the neutrality of Belgium and Britain's moral obligation to protect the northern coast of France. In closing, he asserted that with a powerful fleet "we shall suffer but little more than we shall suffer even if we stand aside." The leader of the Unionist Party immediately pledged the support of his Party in the prosecution of the

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 15th Annual Conference of the Labor Party*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 5th series,

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1809-1827.

war. The Irish Nationalists, through John Redmond, declared "that the democracy of Ireland will turn with utmost anxiety and sympathy to this country in every trial and every danger that may overtake it." Then followed the speech of Ramsay Macdonald, leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party. He characterized the speech of Sir Edward Grey as "impressive," "moving," but thought him and the government wrong in their war policy. Sir Edward, he said, did not point out a single danger to Great Britain but based his plea on national honor. Great Britain fought the Crimean War and the South African War because of national honor. "If the right hon. Gentleman could come to us and tell us that a small European nationality like Belgium is in danger, and could assure us that he is going to confine the conflict to that question, then we would support him. What is the use of talking about coming to the aid of Belgium, when, as a matter of fact, you are engaging in a whole European war which is not going to leave the map of Europe in the position it is now?" As regards France, British friendship for that country was not of such a nature as to justify entering into a war on her behalf. "So far as we are concerned, whatever may happen, whatever may be said about us, whatever attack may be made upon us, we will take the action that we will take of saying that this country ought to have remained neutral, because in the deepest parts of our hearts we believe that that was right and that that alone was consistent with the honour of the country and the traditions of the Party that are now in office."<sup>1</sup> Keir Hardie, the only other laborite who participated in that momentous debate, declared that as there were prospects of securing the integrity of Belgium after the war and of making Germany refrain from bombarding

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 65, pp. 1829-1831.



the northern coast of France, the cabinet could achieve their objects without going to war. He and his associates were going to rouse the working classes of the country in opposition to the policy of the government.<sup>1</sup>

The demand of Macdonald and Hardie for neutrality was supported in speeches by fifteen non-laborite members of the House of Commons. Philip Morrell, Edmund Harvey, R. L. Outhwaite, P. A. Molteno, A. A. W. H. Ponsonby, Llewelyn Williams, and others rose one after another to express their dissatisfaction with the Grey statement:<sup>2</sup> the reasons for war—the integrity of Belgium and the protection of French coasts—were to them unreal and might be secured without war; the real reason was “the fear and jealousy of German ambition;” the war so entered into would preserve the Russian despotism with its violations of the rights of such small nations as Finland and Persia. Joseph King put the blame for starting the war on the bureaucracy and military caste of Germany and deplored the necessity of fighting the German people.

On the fourth of August, John Burns, noted for his championship of the New Trade Unionism in the later eighties and nineties, and Lord Morley resigned from the cabinet, unable to agree to the war policy of their colleagues.

On the day on which Great Britain declared war on Germany (August 5th), the Executive of the Labor Party passed a resolution, endorsed at a joint meeting by the Parliamentary Labor Party, which sought to register the position of British labor at the opening of hostilities. Its terms were:

“That the conflict between the nations in Europe in which this country is involved is owing to Foreign Min-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1839-1841.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1833 *et seq.*

isters pursuing diplomatic policies for the purpose of maintaining a balance of power; that our own national policy of understanding with France and Russia only was bound to increase the power of Russia both in Europe and Asia, and to endanger good relations with Germany. That Sir Edward Grey, as proved by the facts which he gave to the House of Commons, committed without the knowledge of our people the honour of the country to supporting France in the event of any war in which she was seriously involved, and gave definite assurances of support before the House of Commons had any chance of considering the matter. That the Labor Movement reiterates the fact that it has opposed the policy which has produced the war, and that its duty now is to secure peace at the earliest possible moment on such conditions as will provide the best opportunities for the re-establishment of amicable feelings between the workers of Europe.”<sup>1</sup>

So far as the terms of the resolution went, British labor, on the day when Britain declared war on Germany, did not think of the war as one for democracy, for the rights of small nations, as a war to end war, or as one for the vindication of the sanctity of treaties. The resolution also indicated the desire for an early peace, secured by whatever means. While it presumes too much to say that the resolution represented the ideas of all labor leaders, much less of the rank and file, it should be observed that there was no other official labor declaration embodying different views on the war.

Asquith asked for the first Vote of Credit for the war on August 6th. On the refusal of the members of the Labor Party to make any statement, Ramsay Macdonald resigned the chairmanship of the Party and Arthur Henderson was

<sup>1</sup>*Report of the 15th Annual Conference, p. 3.*

elected his successor. Asquith, in summarizing the reasons of the government for war, stated them to be, first, the fulfilment of "a solemn international obligation," that is, the guarantee of Belgian neutrality, and secondly, the vindication of "the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and over-mastering Power." Rown-tree (non-laborite) expressed the hope that the government would adhere loyally to these objects throughout the war and not allow military events to tempt it to territorial aggrandizement. Aneurin Williams and W. H. Dickinson (non-laborites) urged the government to utilize all opportunities, including the good offices of President Wilson, to secure an early termination of the war.<sup>1</sup>

Hostilities begun, the majority of the laborites in Parliament supported the government. A number joined the parliamentary recruiting committee. The first pro-war official pronouncement by a responsible labor organ came on September 3rd, when the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress issued a manifesto to the trade unionists of the country. The manifesto approved the action of the laborites in recruiting; urged the people to volunteer in order to avoid conscription; asked the government to care for the soldiers and their dependents; and declared that the war was one for democracy. In its own words: ". . . upon the result of the struggle in which this country is now engaged rests the preservation and maintenance of free and unfettered democratic government, which in its international relationships has in the past been recognized, and must unquestionably in the future prove, to be the best guarantee for the preservation of the peace of the world." It ended with the following invocation:

<sup>1</sup>Hansard, *loc. cit.*, pp. 2073-2097.

"Long life to the free institutions of all democratically governed countries." <sup>1</sup>

It will be noted that that first statement of the case of the Allies made by British labor was more general in terms and invested the war more with a crusading spirit than either the Grey or the Asquith statement.

From this point on, till the latter part of 1917, the majority of labor leaders were at one with the government, criticising it only in matters of detail in the treatment of labor. The attitude of the majoritaires of the Labor Party was in no wise different from that of other patriotic public men in the British Isles. As Henderson, the new chairman, put it at the opening of Parliament in November, 1914: "Believing as we do, that in proportion to the completeness of the victory will be the permanence of our future peace, we shall continue, as we have done from the commencement of hostilities, to give the Government our united support, in the hope, as the Gracious Speech says, that we may carry this issue to that desirable success upon which most of us have set our hearts." <sup>2</sup>

The Conference of Allied Socialist and Labor Parties, held in London, in February, 1915, declared the war to be the product of capitalist society and of aggressive imperialism.<sup>3</sup> It believed, however, that in view of the German invasion of Belgium and France a German victory "would be the defeat and destruction of democracy and liberty in Europe."<sup>4</sup>

The Trades Union Congress omitted its usual meetings in 1914. For the view of the "parliament of labor" we have to go to the proceedings of the 1915 Congress. The

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 47th Trades Union Congress*, pp. 212-213.

<sup>2</sup> *Hansard*, 5th series, vol. 68, pp. 43-52.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the 15th Annual Conference*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>4</sup> *Cf. infra*, pp. 188-189.

presidential address at the latter Congress characterized the war as the death-grapple between two systems that could not co-exist: "Prussian militarism, with all its attested cruelty, rapine, and murders, and any form of it here at home, must be destroyed." As regards Belgium, the address affirmed that the war should not stop before Belgium was restored to its people.<sup>1</sup>

The main war resolution of the Congress was moved by J. Sexton of the Parliamentary Committee and of the Dock Laborers. It stated:

"That this Trades Union Congress, while expressing its opposition (in accordance with its previously expressed opinions) to all systems of militarism as a danger to human progress, considers the present action of Great Britain and her Allies as completely justified and expresses its horror at the atrocities which have been committed by the German-Austrian military authorities, and the callous, brutal, and unnecessary sacrifice of the lives of non-combatants, including women and children, and hereby pledges itself to assist the Government, as far as possible, in the successful prosecution of the war."<sup>2</sup>

The resolution, it will be noted, gave no reason for its support of the Allies but stressed the atrocities. The debate on it, however, revealed a long array of reasons for the war. Sexton, in proposing the resolution, declared that it was the German atrocities which converted many trade unionists from pacifism to ardent supporters of the war. He believed that the war was not a capitalist war but a war of defence. In closing, he attacked the policy of the Union of Democratic Control, characterizing it "as a dog going round in a circle at the head of his bed, and not knowing

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 47th Congress*, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 317.

where to lay down”<sup>1</sup> J. H. Wilson (Seamen and Firemen) supported the resolution because he believed that after a German victory British trade unions could not long survive; E. H. Jarvis (Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners), because “our fellow workers in a weaker country have been attacked by those in a stronger country;” Ben Tillet (formerly of General Laborers Union), because “we are in this war for our own sake, and if we should lose in the struggle we shall lose more than any other country;” G. H. Roberts (Typographical Association), because “after she (Germany) had disposed of her other enemies then she would start upon her greater task—war with this country and the absorption of the British Empire,” and because “. . . in a vanquished Great Britain your trade unionism would be of little avail;” finally, J. Robsom (Miners’ Federation), because he had “a strong conviction that the German workers have gone into the trenches to fight our men more cheerfully than some of the friends think.” Tillet, Wilson, and Bramley (Furnishing Trades), however, sought to make the distinction between the German government and the German people who, according to Wilson, “have not got the opportunity or the facility or the liberty to express their opinions in opposition to this war.” The Sexton resolution was passed by a vote of 600 to 7.<sup>2</sup>

A further indication of the attitude of the 1915 Trades Union Congress towards the war can be found in a resolution and an amendment to it on the action of the laborites

<sup>1</sup> The aims of the Union of Democratic Control were: (a) no transfer of territory without consent of inhabitants, (b) no treaty without parliamentary sanction, (c) substitution of International Council for balance of power, (d) disarmament. Macdonald, Ponsonby, Trevelyan, Norman Angell, and J. A. Hobson were on its central committee.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 317-328.

who co-operated in the recruiting campaigns. The resolution, moved by A. G. Walker (Railway Clerks' Association), approved the recruiting activities of the laborites while the amendment, moved by H. H. Elvin (National Union of Clerks), claimed that the co-operation of the laborites should have been made conditional on the government's guaranteeing adequate provision for the disabled and for the dependents of the killed. The amendment found seventeen supporters and the resolution had three hundred and seventy-one supporters.<sup>1</sup>

The 1915 Trades Union Congress was almost unanimously in favour of Great Britain's belligerency. It was also impatient with any attempts which might hamper the effective prosecution of the war.

The first Labor Party Conference held during the war took place in the spring of 1916. Sexton moved at the Conference a resolution identical with the one he moved at the Trades Union Congress. It was passed by a vote representing 1,502,000 against 602,000 constituents—the majority being much smaller than at the Congress.<sup>2</sup>

It would be speculation to try to estimate how far the British working people agreed with the earlier anti-war or the later pro-war resolutions passed by the various official bodies in the labor world of Great Britain. Labor sentiment in regard to the war, if the resolutions were representative, underwent a complete change in the last three weeks of August, 1914.

Labor's justification of British belligerency was based mainly on three grounds: (a) vindication of the principles of nationality and democracy, (b) German atrocities, and (c) the threat to British trade-unionism thought to be in-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 331-338.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 15th Annual Conference*, p. 16.

herent in a German victory. So far as the first ground was concerned, it was by no means distinctive of labor, being, in fact, the universal plea in the western entente countries. The second ground could only justify the continuance of the war, not the original assumption of belligerency by Britain; it was also universal. The third ground was distinctive of labor, but a comparative study of trade unionism under Prussianism and under the Anglo-Saxon traditions of liberty would show that this distinctive feature of labor sentiment in favour of the war was, at best, only a good war cry.

## 2. *A Negotiated or Victorious Peace*

The resolution of the Executive of the Labor Party, passed on August 5th, 1914, included, as has been noted, a clause favoring an early peace. The question was not raised again for more than a year. On November 15th, 1915, C. P. Trevelyan (non-laborite then) made one of the first pleas for a negotiated peace in the House of Commons.<sup>1</sup> Speaking on a Vote of Credit, Trevelyan deprecated a war of attrition, which, according to him, would mean irretrievable ruin to both Britain and Germany. He urged the government to attain Britain's objects through negotiation whenever the opportunity should arise instead of by an indefinite continuance of the war. This view was immediately disputed by O'Connor (non-laborite) and John Hodge (laborite), who believed that a negotiated peace meant leaving the task unfinished to the future generations who would have to make the sacrifices over again.<sup>2</sup>

The subject was more formally presented to the House by Philip Snowden in February, 1916. On the objects of the war, there was, Snowden felt, no difference of opinion;

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 75, pp. 1557-1563.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1578-1583.



the difference existed only in regard to the method of their attainment. The great disadvantage of a victorious peace was the unfavorable frame of mind and spirit in which it would have to be made, as a military decision would create unreasonable passions in both victor and vanquished. The unity of the Allies, he thought, was not likely to last beyond the end of the war. A defeated Germany would harbour ambitions of revenge and might even be able to find support from one or more of the Allies against the others. One of the conditions of a lasting peace must be the enlistment of the great German democracy in its cause. As the German Social Democrats were agitating for a negotiated peace, the moment was propitious for some step on the part of the British government.<sup>1</sup> The debate was continued by Walsh (laborite) who told the House that Snowden was not representative of British labor. He thought the plea for a negotiated peace most unwise. Germany having broken pledges, it was useless to get more from her; war had been made inevitable by German ambition as shown in the successive annexations of Schleswig-Holstein and of Alsace-Lorraine and as shown by the elaborate war preparations of Germany.<sup>2</sup> Mason (non-laborite) held that Germany had good reasons to prepare for war: British acquiescence in the Italian War for Tripoli had demonstrated Britain's desire to detach Italy from the Triple Alliance; British support of France in the Agadir crisis made Britain a plain accomplice in violating the Act of Algeciras.<sup>3</sup> Sir William Byle (non-laborite) declared that a negotiated peace had two advantages over a victorious peace: it was sooner and it was more likely to be just.<sup>4</sup> Trevelyan stated that the anomaly

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 80, pp. 713-726.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 744-749.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 749-755.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 757-760.

of the situation was that "both the Prime Minister of England and the German Chancellor have let it be understood that they are ready to consider proposals put forward by their enemies, but neither will or have yet put forward propositions themselves."<sup>1</sup>

A line of argument, only hinted at in the earlier pleas for a negotiated peace, was made prominent by Ponsonby in May, 1916. "What is the difference between Great Britain and Germany now?" asked Ponsonby. "Is it the obligation we have undertaken with regard to our Allies which makes the continuance of war a necessity? If this War is being continued until Constantinople falls, if this War is being continued because of some obligation we have undertaken with Russia, with Italy, and with France, then I say emphatically that whatever they are, our people ought to know in what they consist. . . I appeal to the House of Commons, as much as to the Government, to take the earliest opportunity to press for the termination of the fruitless and disastrous conflict by the initiation of negotiations at the earliest possible moment."<sup>2</sup>

This underlying suspicion of the purity of the Allies' motives in the war marked almost all the subsequent pleas for a negotiated peace. Holt (non-laborite) in October, 1916, asked the government to be careful that in the prosecution of the war British objects did not degenerate.<sup>3</sup> On this occasion, Wardle, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party, stated with some definiteness the attitude of his group towards the whole agitation for a peace through negotiation. Wardle regretted that there were dissensions in the Labor Party in regard to the question but assured the government that the large majority of his fellow-laborites

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 80, pp. 726-734.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 82, pp. 2180-2188.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 86, pp. 128-133.

stood for "carrying on this War to a final and successful conclusion."<sup>1</sup>

The question was formally debated in the Labor Party Conference held in the latter part of January, 1917. Two opposing resolutions<sup>2</sup> were submitted. The one for a negotiated peace, moved by the British Socialist Party, was worded as follows:

"This Conference of the Labor Party declares that the War has demonstrated the inability of capitalism to preserve peace among the nations and has revealed its essential imperialistic character. Already the prolongation of the War only serves to complicate the issues involved and render more remote the possibilities of peace. This Conference therefore declares that the best interest of the working class will be served by a speedy termination of hostilities and demands of the Government that it declares its readiness to enter into immediate negotiations for peace." In support of the resolution, E. C. Fairchild, representing the British Socialist Party, pointed to the reply of the Allies (January 10, 1917) to the peace note of President Wilson (December 18, 1916): the reply, he stated, showed that the Allies, under the disguise of fighting for small nationalities, were really aiming at the dismemberment of the Central Empires. The resolution was defeated by the Conference by a vote of 302,000 against 1,697,000.

The other resolution, moved by W. Thorne (General Workers), declared:

"This Conference declares that, seeing the invasion of Belgium and France by the German armies threatens the very existence of independent nationalities and strikes a blow at all faith in treaties, a victory for German Imperial-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 86, pp. 107-111.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of 16th Annual Conference*, pp. 126-128.

ism would be the defeat and destruction of democracy and liberty in Europe. It agrees that the fight should continue until victory is achieved, and that the Socialist and Trade Union organizations of the Allied Powers should meet simultaneously with the Peace Congress."

The issue was clearly drawn; the first resolution demanded a negotiated peace because the war was due to capitalism and the second demanded a victorious peace because the war was fought for democracy and nationality. The majority of the Labor Party favored, as shown by their defeat of the first resolution and their acceptance of the second, a victorious peace because they believed in the latter interpretation of the war. The provision of a simultaneous meeting of the Allied Socialists and Trade Unionists with the peace conference was made on the assumption that labor had a contribution to make in the conclusion of peace

On February 12th, 1917, Ramsay Macdonald, in spite of the action of the Party Conference, again advocated peace through negotiation. He told the House that the word "finish" should be carefully defined. To him, it meant the attainment of "the maximum political result from the minimum military effort, although that minimum may be a very big one."<sup>1</sup> Two days later, Wardle rose to repudiate the views of Macdonald. He believed that a nation guilty as Germany was of the invasion of Belgium, of Zeppelin raids, and of "murder on the high seas," could not be deflected from its purpose by such negotiations as Macdonald advocated. He was not disturbed at the idea of Constantinople going to Russia but by the prospect of the German empire reaching from Berlin to Bagdad.<sup>2</sup>

The controversy was continued to the very eve of the

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 90, pp. 339-350.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 697-704.

Armistice. America's entry into the conflict made no difference to either of the contending factions. In November, 1917, Lees Smith (non-laborite) moved a resolution for a negotiated peace.<sup>1</sup> Three months later, Holt (non-laborite) moved the censure of the government for its part in the statement of the Supreme War Council that the prosecution of the war was the only immediate task of the Allies.<sup>2</sup> In June, 1918, Morrell (non-laborite) moved for the government to begin negotiations.<sup>3</sup> Of these resolutions, only the one moved by Smith reached a division, which resulted in 282 against and 31 for. The laborites were divided into two groups; W. C. Anderson, Burns, Jowett, Macdonald, Richardson, and Snowden, voting with the minority, and Barnes, Brace, Clynes, Crooks, Hodge, Hudson, O'Grady, Parker, Sutton, J. H. Thomas, Walsh, and J. Williams voting with the majority.

It must be patent that the difference of opinion in the Labor Party on the question of a negotiated peace is but another phase of the difference in the interpretation of the war. The suspicions and warnings of the advocates of a negotiated peace in regard to the purity of the objects of the Allies met with no consideration from the majority of the Party till after the publication of the secret treaties by Soviet Russia in the winter of 1917. The majoritaires believed in the utter iniquity of Germany and the idealism of the Allies.

This controversy was an integral part of that on war aims and on the peace treaties and its full meaning cannot be made clear till the other two subjects have been considered.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 98, pp. 2007-2016.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 103, pp. 148-150.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 107, pp. 538-547.

### 3. *War Aims*

The agitation centering around war aims pursued three lines of tactics: (a) demanding of the government definite statements of its concrete objects in the war; (b) criticizing such governmental aims as were stated in the resolutions of the Inter-Allied Paris Economic Conference in the summer of 1916 and in the Inter-Allied Reply to the note of President Wilson, and as revealed by military strategy, particularly the Gallipoli expedition and the campaign in Mesopotamia, by rumors, and by the secret treaties as published by the Soviet government, and (c) statements of war aims made by the agitators themselves.

The resolutions of the Conference of the Allied Socialist and Labor Parties in London, in February, 1915, which have been referred to in an earlier section, included a fairly detailed statement of war aims. They disavowed any desire to pursue the political and economic destruction of Germany. They proclaimed that the war was against the governments, not the peoples, of Germany and Austria. They demanded the liberation of Belgium. They endorsed the aspirations of Poland. In the territorial settlements in general, they declared for the principle of self-determination, although the phrase was not used. Finally, they expressed a resolve to "resist any attempt to transform this defensive war into a war of conquest."

The position of the Inter-Allied Conference was not accepted by the 1915 Trades Union Congress, which refused altogether to make or to ask the government to make any statement of war aims. At the Congress, the Amalgamated Laborers of Great Britain and Ireland submitted two resolutions in regard to war aims. The one, which was considered by the Congress but was defeated by a large majority, urged the Parliamentary Committee to issue a state-

ment of war aims and to press the government to declare specifically its objects in the war. Twomey, moving the resolution on the behalf of his Union, stated that although the British people said they were fighting for liberty and democracy, it should be admitted that the German people might say the same things. If the objects of the belligerents were the same, he saw no reason for continuing the war; if they were different, he wished to know the differences.<sup>1</sup> The other resolution, which was not considered by the Congress, demanded, besides democratic control of diplomacy, three conditions in the peace settlement: no transfer of territory without the consent of the majority of the inhabitants; an "International Council comprising the great Powers of Europe, America, and the Colonies, with adequate safeguards for the security of the lesser States and Powers;" and disarmament after the war.<sup>2</sup> At the 1916 Labor Party Conference, a similar resolution was submitted by the Independent Labor Party. It was defeated by a vote of 688,000 to 1,045,000.<sup>3</sup>

Both at the Congress and at the Conference, the opposition to these resolutions was not so much due to their terms as to the consideration that it was untimely to discuss war aims at all.

In February, 1916, both Outhwaite and King (non-laborites) protested in the House of Commons against the concealment of the real objects of the Allies in the war.<sup>4</sup> King asked if the Gallipoli campaign was not calculated to obtain Constantinople for Russia and what bargain was struck when Italy joined.

One month later, J. M. Robertson (non-laborite), in view

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 47th Congress*, pp. 361-364.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 364.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of 15th Annual Conference*, p. 132.

<sup>4</sup> *Hansard*, 5th series, vol. 80, pp. 525-537.

of the forthcoming economic conference of the Allies at Paris, initiated the first debate in the House of Commons on the economic objects of the Allies. He believed that the contemplated trade boycott of Germany after the war would be prejudicial to British trade and would prevent Germany from paying the indemnity.<sup>1</sup> The question was not fully discussed till August, 1916, after the resolutions of the Paris Conference had been stated to the House by Asquith.<sup>2</sup> The more important of the decisions of the Allied Economic Conference were: (a) economic unity of the Allies during the war; (b) during reconstruction, reparations from Germany, denial of most-favored-nation treatment of Germany, and preventing German control of raw materials in Allied countries, and (c) in peace, the Allies to render themselves economically independent of enemy nations through government subsidies and scientific research, through improvement of inter-Allied trade, and through inter-Allied assimilation of trademarks and copyrights. Sir John Simon (non-laborite) opposed these policies on two grounds: in the first place, he believed they would prevent the payment of indemnities by Germany and, secondly, they would spoil the peace settlement.<sup>3</sup> Snowden denounced the decisions of the Conference as being based on the idea of a Europe divided permanently into two hostile camps.<sup>4</sup> Wardle, Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party, hesitated between approval and opposition: if Germany should embrace democracy after the war, he was willing to re-establish economic relations with Germany; if Germany wished an economic war after the war, he was prepared to

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 80, pp. 1755-1762.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 85, pp. 332-337.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 347-358.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 379-389.



support the government in the economic war also.<sup>1</sup> John Hodge, also of the majority wing of the Labor Party, took a more decided position: he, as a representative of the Steel Smelters, was not willing to see the twenty thousand men from the iron and steel trades, who had been fighting in the trenches from the beginning of the war, kept out of employment by the dumping of German products in Great Britain. He believed that the war had shown the futility of free trade in preserving peace. As regards the cost of living, he thought that the example of Australia showed conclusively the lack of any relationship between protection and the cost of living.<sup>2</sup>

The 1916 Trades Union Congress debated war aims from a different angle from Parliament. The Parliamentary Committee of the Congress recommended that an International Trades Union Congress should be held to define the terms of peace acceptable to the working class. The debate centered on the inclusion of enemy trade unions.<sup>3</sup> Those who opposed the recommendation thought that there was no common ground between British and German workers. In the words of J. Jones (National General Workers): "The German Socialists and the German Trade Unions are just as responsible for the devastation of homes, lives, and liberty as the Kaiser himself." The supporters of the recommendation, on the other hand, believed that co-operation between German and British labor was essential in the attainment of a just peace. C. G. Ammon (Fawcett Association) declared that German and British workers were equally impotent in resisting militarism and that the two national groups must "act in common . . . and

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 80, pp. 361-364.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 398-402.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of 48th Congress*, pp. 213-226.

strike a blow for freedom." T E Taylor (London Compositors) wished the Congress to remember that what the British people thought about German Junkerdom was exactly what the German people thought about British Junkerdom. E. Bevin (Dock and Riverside Workers) thought that without the intervention of the workers the peace was not likely to be a just peace, for, "when these cold-blooded lawyers and politicians sit at that peace table they will be more concerned about the division of Persia than the abduction of the women from Lille." The recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee was rejected by a vote of 1,486,000 to 723,000.

The 1917 Manchester Conference of the Labour Party was marked by two positive decisions, the repudiation of the economic war after the war and the demand for a League of Nations as a part of the peace settlement. The fiscal resolution was moved by Snowden. It declared that an economic war after the war would be disastrous to every country and would make an enduring peace impossible.<sup>1</sup> The League of Nations resolution was moved by A. G. Walker (Railway Clerks). It claimed that labor should be represented in the British delegation to negotiate peace and that the delegation should work for the formation of "an International League to enforce the maintenance of peace on the plan advocated by the President of the United States and approved by the British Foreign Secretary; each affiliated nation to co-operate to restrain by any means that may be necessary any government or nation which acts in violation of the laws and judgment of the International Court."<sup>2</sup> Both of these resolutions were accepted by the Conference. A third resolution, similar in nature to the recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee to the

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 16th Annual Conference*, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

Congress and advocated for similar reasons, was defeated by the Conference by a vote of 1,498,000 to 696,000.<sup>1</sup>

From this point on, the League of Nations became a practical issue in discussions on war aims. Lees Smith pointed out in the House of Commons on February 12th, 1917, the vital relation between the League and other parts of the peace settlement. The Allies, he said, seemed to be determined to gratify various imperialistic desires, one in Constantinople, others in Dalmatia, Africa, and the islands of the Pacific. They were also aiming at an economic boycott of the enemy nations. This line of policy was for the moment popular, but if it was carried out, all hopes of a successful League of Nations must be abandoned.<sup>2</sup>

This criticism of Allied war aims was continued one week later in a debate in which the majority and the minority wings of the Labor Party directly opposed each other on the floor of the Commons. The debate centered around the Allied reply to the note of President Wilson. Ponsonby further enlarged on the imperialistic desires of the Allies, which Smith had treated on the 12th. He thought that the British campaign in Mesopotamia simply meant that the region would be added to the British empire. Egypt and Cyprus had already fallen under British control. In all, the British empire was to gain about a million and a half square miles of territory. He could not reconcile these facts with the professions of the government. But that was not all. A Russian Liberal statesman had interpreted the Allied reply to mean that Syria was to be given to France, Arabia to Great Britain, and Western Asia Minor and Smyrna to Italy. Austria-Hungary was also to be dismembered. All this might be good policy, but the Allies should not claim to be exonerated from imperialism when the reply implied

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 16th Annual Conference*, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> *Hansard*, 5th series, vol. 90, pp. 350-355.

the breaking-up of the Turkish and Austro-Hungarian empires.<sup>1</sup>

Snowden and Macdonald spoke for the labor minoritaires. The former took the occasion to review the whole war. Belgian neutrality, he said, was an after-thought with the Allies: the Unionist Opposition had pledged its support to the government before Belgium was invaded; Grey had promised France support before Belgium was invaded; the Labor Party in August, 1914, did not think Belgium a factor. Most of the phrases current—"righteous war," "war to end war," "liberation of mankind,"—were current in the Napoleonic War and the Crimean War. British policy in Egypt and French policy in Morocco were among the causes of the war. Germany prepared for the war; so did Great Britain. Germany craved for empire; so did Great Britain, France, and Russia.<sup>2</sup> Macdonald had three objections to the Allied reply. First, it united German public opinion against the Allies. Secondly, it would complicate the Balkan problem: already, the controversy between Italy and Jugo-Slavia about Dalmatia and the Eastern Adriatic had assumed an acute form. Finally, by giving Constantinople to a great power, it made an unarmed peace impossible for Great Britain.<sup>3</sup>

Wardle and Tootill stated the position of the labor majoritaires. The former thought German public opinion had no effect on German government. After all, he said, Germany started the war. So long as that fact remained and so long as German armies committed atrocities, he would continue to support the government.<sup>4</sup> Tootill held "strongly to the view that the first object that this House

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 90, pp. 1177-1184.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1212-1229.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1244-1249.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1249-1252.

and country should have in view is the winning of the war. . . . From that position I cannot and will not depart.”<sup>1</sup>

The Russian government, it will be remembered, declared for a peace “without annexations or indemnities” in May, 1917. On the 16th, Snowden moved in the House of Commons,

“That this House welcomes the declaration of the new democratic Government of Russia, repudiating all proposals for imperialistic conquest and aggrandisement, and calls on His Majesty’s Government to issue a similar declaration in behalf of the British democracy, and to join with the Allies in restating the Allied terms in conformity with the Russian declaration.”<sup>2</sup>

The central argument of Snowden was that the permanence of future peace and the success of the League of Nations depended on such a settlement of the war as the Russian declaration called for. The resolution was seconded by Lees Smith Macdonald on that occasion warned the government that the Russians suspected the Allies of imperialistic designs and that unless this suspicion was removed there would be a separate peace between Russia and Germany. The labor majoritaires made no pronouncement on the resolution, which was not pushed to a division.

The German Reichstag passed its peace resolution on July 19th. On the 26th, Ramsay Macdonald moved in the House of Commons that “in view of the resolution passed by the representatives of the German people, assembled in the Reichstag, to the effect that, putting aside the thought of acquisition of territory by force, the Reichstag is striving for a peace of understanding and lasting reconciliation of nations, that with such a peace political, economic, and

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 90, pp. 1264-1267.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 93, pp. 1625-1665.

financial usurpations are incompatible, and that the Reichstag repudiates all plans which aim at the economic isolation and tying down of nations after the War, this House declares that this statement expresses the principle for which this country has stood throughout and calls upon the Government, in conjunction with the Allies, to restate their peace terms accordingly: . . ."<sup>1</sup>

In moving the resolution, Macdonald stated that it was intended to be a moral offensive against German solidarity based on German suspicion of British motives. The suspicion, he said, had been strengthened by "official declarations of the knockout-blow type" and by the decisions of the Paris Economic Conference. The Government had failed to take advantage of the moral effects of the Russian revolution and must not fail again to take advantage of the Reichstag resolution. Finally, Macdonald demanded to know the terms of agreement between the Allies and Roumania, which "appears to give to Roumania territory to which she is not entitled on any ethnological grounds." He wished also to know the terms of the agreement with Italy on April 27th, 1915.

Snowden, in supporting the resolution, sought to answer the question of Bonar Law as to the meaning of "no annexations and no indemnities." Belgium, he said, should be restored and compensated. Outside of Belgium, reparation should be paid out of a general fund to which each of the belligerent nations should contribute "in proportion to its ascertained responsibility of that damage." The question of Alsace-Lorraine should be settled according to the principle of self-determination. He pleaded with the House not to defeat the resolution, for its defeat would reveal the fact "that the majority of the Members of the House

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 96, pp. 1479-1496.

of Commons do not want, do not strive for, a peace with understanding and a lasting reconciliation with the nations."<sup>1</sup>

In the debate, the labor majoritaires were represented by Wardle and O'Grady. The former wished the House to follow the example, not of the German Reichstag, but of the French Chamber of Deputies. The House should, he contended, send, with the Chamber, fraternal greetings to the Russian democracy and declare that "it expects from the War which has been imposed upon Europe by the aggression of Imperialistic Germany, along with the liberation of the invaded territories, the return of Alsace-Lorraine to the mother country, and just reparation for the damage inflicted." These, according to Wardle, were the objects of the majority of the Labor Party, and these objects, he said, could only be achieved by fighting.<sup>2</sup> O'Grady thought that the peace which Macdonald and Snowden were striving for was an inconclusive peace. And "God knows that I love peace as well as any one, but I confess that if an inconclusive peace were brought about and this country were in any way under the domination of the Central Powers I could not breathe the atmosphere."<sup>3</sup>

Outside of Labor, Lees Smith was one of the very few who supported the Macdonald resolution. He advocated a new principle in regard to the government of colonies. He believed that such government should, in the first place, be primarily in the interest of the primitive inhabitants, and secondly, should be in the hands of an international board so as to secure equality of opportunity to every nation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 96, pp. 1527-1537.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1509-1515.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1565-1573.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1515-1519.

The resolution was defeated by a vote of 19 ayes and 148 noes. Anderson, Burns, Macdonald, Jowett, Richardson, and Snowden were the six labor members among the ayes, while Barnes, Duncan, Goldstone, Hodge, Hudson, O'Grady, Parker, G. H. Roberts, Walsh, Wardle, and W. T. Wilson were the laborites who voted with the noes.

The resignation of Arthur Henderson from the coalition cabinet soon after the debate on the Macdonald resolution may be said to mark the point after which the labor majoritaires began to weaken in their loyalty to the government. Henderson was in Russia from May to July. Upon his return, he urged the Government to bring the Allied war aims into harmony with the Russian, to revise the secret treaties, and to interpose no obstacle to the holding of an immediate international conference of Labor and Socialist Parties. He resigned when the government refused to accept his proposals.

The spirit and action of the Blackpool Trades Union Congress in September, 1917, showed a marked departure from the previous Congresses in its attitude towards the war. J. W. Ogden, in his presidential address, quoted President Wilson, Painlevé, and Henderson to show that the "agreed object of the Allied Governments is the destruction of German militarism by the substitution of German democracy." "Can we," he asked, "accomplish this by military means? . . . War is the negation of democracy whether we win or lose. The denial of the right of allied democracies to meet the common people of all countries for the propagation and establishment of a world democracy is contrary to the declared views of the Allied governments. . . . We broke our ideals of no annexation to grant the Tsar's request that Constantinople should be added to his already too large dominions. At his request we sacrificed 200,000 of our best sons in Gallipoli and Greece, and with him we are



responsible for the treachery to Roumania . . . Of the imperialistic and annexationist aims ascribed to us by our enemies, we, at least, know nothing, and we are still ready to repudiate them . Our quarrel is not with workingmen and women of Germany, but with a system and a Government which has created fear and suspicion in Europe, and burdened the peoples with armaments and the means of war."<sup>1</sup> The action of the British Government in not sanctioning the Stockholm Conference, hinted at in the presidential address, was challenged by the Congress in a formal resolution moved by Robert Smilie of the Miners' Federation. The resolution asked that the Parliamentary Committee should be authorized to arrange an International Socialist and Labor Conference to define the terms of peace. It protested against the refusal of the government to issue passports for the Stockholm Conference and demanded that the government should interpose no obstacles in the assembling of the new conference. This resolution, similar to the one before the 1916 Congress, was rejected at the 1916 Congress by a majority of two to one but was passed by the 1917 Congress by a vote of 2,849,000 to 91,000—or almost unanimously.<sup>2</sup> The 1917 Congress also repudiated the economic war after the war by a majority of ten to one.<sup>3</sup>

Up to September, 1917, both the majority and minority factions of the Labor Party had stated in various connections their war aims. Although the minority had paid more attention to the subject than the majority and had made more detailed pronouncements on it, neither had issued a comprehensive responsible declaration. Such a declaration was produced between September and December, known as

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 49th Congress*, pp. 57-59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 71-74.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 290.

the Memorandum on War Aims.<sup>1</sup> The Memorandum was first drafted by the Labor Party at a special conference in September. It was then referred to a joint committee of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the Executive of the Labor Party and was re-drafted by that body. On December 28th, a special joint conference of the societies affiliated with the two organizations was convoked in London, which passed the Memorandum with practical unanimity. British labor then arranged an Inter-Allied Socialist and Labor Conference in London, February, 1918. The peace proposals contained in the Memorandum came out of the Conference as the final war aims of the socialist and labor elements in the Allied countries. In view of its practical and theoretical importance, the terms of the Memorandum will be studied with some care and its differences from and similarities to the Fourteen Points of President Wilson will also be noted.

Section I of the Memorandum declared that the peoples of Europe had no part in causing the war and reaffirmed the statement of the Socialist and Labor Parties of the Allied countries issued in February, 1915.<sup>2</sup>

Section II stated that "the fundamental purpose of the Conference in supporting the continuance of the struggle is that the world may be made safe for democracy." For this purpose, a League of Nations must be instituted. The League should include all the belligerent and neutral nations. It should have an International High Court, "for settlement of all disputes between States that are of a justiciable nature," and for "prompt and effective mediation between States in other issues that vitally interest the power or honor of such States." It should have an International Legisla-

<sup>1</sup> G. D. H. Cole and J. S. Middleton (editors), *The Labor Year Book*, 1919, pp. 29-39.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*.

ture. It was to superintend all plebiscites for the transfer of territory at the end of the war. Its successful functioning demanded the democratization of every country, including parliamentary control of diplomacy and the publication of all treaties. It was to enforce disarmament.

Section III dealt with territorial questions. The guiding principle in the settlement of these questions should be self-determination. (a) Belgium must have her independence restored and damages repaired. (b) As regards Alsace-Lorraine, the Memorandum declared that the German declaration of war in 1914 nullified "the gains of a brutal conquest." "France, having secured this recognition, can properly agree to a fresh consultation of the population of Alsace and Lorraine as to its own destinies." (c) In the Balkans, "wherever any population of the same race and tongue demands to be united this must be done." A Balkan Conference or an International Commission should deal with the problem of administrative re-organization on the basis of (i) local autonomy, (ii) freedom of religion and political equality, (iii) customs and postal union, free access for each unit to its natural seaport, and (iv) a Balkan federation for the regulation of common interests. (d) Labor sympathized with the Italian claim for union of all of Italian blood and tongue but the relation between Italy and Jugo-Slavia "must be based on equity and conciliation." Minorities of one people in the territory of the other should be given local autonomy. (e) Poland should have her independence restored, with free access to the sea, the Germany must not attack any of the Baltic states. (f) The Jews should have a national home in Palestine. (g) As regards Turkey, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Arabia were not to be returned to Turkish rule, but should be granted either independence or control by the League of Nations; the Dardanelles should be neutralized and con-

trolled by the League. (h) Labor had no desire to dismember Austria-Hungary but the claims to national independence of its component parts must be granted. (i) The League should control the Central African colonies on the basis of respect of the rights of natives and equality of economic opportunity for all nations.

Section IV took up permanent economic relations. The League of Nations should control all marine communications. There should be no economic war after the war. The resources of every country should be developed for the benefit not only of its own people but of the world.

Section V dealt with the problem of reconstruction. "Systematic arrangements should be made on an international basis for the allocation and conveyance of the available exportable surpluses of these (indispensable) commodities to the different countries, in proportion, not to their purchasing powers, but to their several pressing needs." In each country, the government should control these commodities. The government should also start constructive enterprises to relieve unemployment.

Section VI claimed from the Central Powers restoration of the devastated areas and reparation of wrongdoing.

Section VII, the last Section, called for an International Congress of Socialist and Labor organizations which accept the principle of self-determination and the formula of "no annexations and no punitive indemnities."

The Fourteen Points were given to the world ten days after the Memorandum was passed by the joint conference of the Labor Party and the Trades Union Congress. Without inquiring into the possible influence one might have had on the other, the striking similarity between the two documents should be noted. All but one of the Fourteen Points were explicitly or implicitly embodied in the Memorandum. The one omission was Point Six, which provided for the

settlement of the Russian question—an omission due to a different conception of the scope of the settlement. The territorial settlements proposed were identical in the two documents, except Point Eight, calling for the righting of the wrong of '71, was less definite than the corresponding section in the Memorandum. In the proposals in regard to the Balkans, the Fourteen Points provided only the satisfaction of nationalistic aspirations while the Memorandum not only demanded that but suggested economic co-operation among the Balkan states. The central difference between the two documents is the latter part of Section IV and the whole of Section V, which found no corresponding parts in the Fourteen Points. Whether the economic regime for the world contemplated in those sections of the Memorandum is practicable or not may be disputed; in setting forth those views, the Memorandum recognized the economic nature of imperialism and sought to remove future conflicts.

The Fourteen Points were adopted by a later Conference of the Allied Socialist and Labor Parties as confirmatory of the War Aims Memorandum.

On the Memorandum itself, much might be said, but for purposes of this study only two remarks need be made. The Memorandum was the most non-imperialistic detailed statement of war aims produced by any responsible body in the Allied countries. In demanding that the German colonies of Central Africa should be placed under the League of Nations and not the African colonies of other nations, the Memorandum failed to apply its anti-imperialistic principles to the important question of the future exploitation of Africa. The regulations for the League control, set forth in the memorandum, redeemed, but only in part, this failure.

Of the enthusiasm of British labor for the principles of President Wilson, there can be no doubt. Upon his arrival

in France, the Labor Party and the Trades Union Congress sent him a telegram which welcomed him to Europe as the "illustrious leader of World Democracy" and expressed "the unbounded admiration and approval of the British Labor and Trades Union Forces" for his "outstanding democratic statesmanship during the stressful period of the War." It further stated that "your conception of a just and enduring peace, including the immediate establishment of a League of Free Nations, drastic reductions of armaments, open diplomacy, and no secret treaties, appeals strongly to them as being in strict harmony with the decisions of the Inter-Allied Labor and Socialist Conference." It ended by assuring President Wilson the support of British labor in his efforts to realize these ideals "for which the associated peoples have made such great and unstinted sacrifices." In January, 1919, at a meeting in Albert Hall, arranged by the Labor Party and the Trades Union Congress to promote the League of Nations, Arthur Henderson moved a vote of congratulations to President Wilson, which was enthusiastically passed.

#### 4. *Treaties of Peace*

When the new Parliament, elected in the general election of December, 1918, assembled in the following February, the Peace Conference was in session in Paris. In the debate on the Address, Adamson, as Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party, now his Majesty's principal opposition in the House of Commons, spoke after the mover and seconder of the Address. He dwelt on pensions, separation allowances, disposal of war property, housing problems; the only topic of an international nature in his speech was a reference to Russia.<sup>1</sup> Wedgwood and Clynes were the

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 112, pp. 56-63.

other laborites who, during the course of the debate, treated the Peace Conference Wedgwood expressed his gratification that Lloyd George was supporting President Wilson at Paris. Clynes protested against the exclusion of labor representatives from the British delegation: G. N. Barnes, though formerly among his associates, was no longer recognized as a member of his Party. "It appears that what is to happen is that some four or five right hon. Gentlemen who are at the head of the Government, virtually in the position of dictators, never referring, so far as we know, any of the important and highly controversial questions to this House, are to proceed month by month to the completion of their great task even to the point of signing the terms as they may be arranged by them."<sup>1</sup>

On April 16th, 1919, Lloyd George reported to the House of Commons on the progress of the Peace Conference. Adamson attacked the Prime Minister for not declaring whether he was trying to realize at the Conference the promises he made during the general election or the pledges he had given on behalf of the British people when he accepted President Wilson's Fourteen Points. He pointed out that in particular there would be a big difference in the reparations if one set or the other of these promises or pledges were to be carried out. He emphasized the importance of including Germany in the League of Nations.<sup>2</sup> Clynes also spoke after the statement of Lloyd George, protesting against the blockade of Russia and the Central Empires and against the secret diplomacy being practised in Paris.<sup>3</sup>

On June first, after the terms of the treaty to be imposed on Germany had become known, the Parliamentary Labor

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 112, pp. 161-165.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 114, pp. 2956-2960.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2998-3004.

Party and the National Executive of the Party issued a lengthly manifesto.<sup>1</sup> Labor objected to the treaty, the manifesto stated, not because of this or that detail of wrong done, but because it was "based upon the very political principles which were the ultimate causes of the War." It violated the principles embodied in the decisions of Allied Socialist and Labor Parties; it violated the terms of the Armistice; it was a repudiation of all the declarations of President Wilson, Lloyd George, and other Allied statesmen. As regards reparations, British labor would limit the sum to five billion pounds. The settlement of the Saar Basin was "equivalent to disguised annexation." The fifteen-year military occupation of the Rhine would render impossible general disarmament. The League of Nations as framed was but "a restricted instrument of the victorious coalition," and should be amended to include Germany and to provide direct representation of peoples and parliaments. "We therefore call upon the organized workers of all countries to join in an effort to bring the treaty more into harmony with the working-class conception of an enduring and democratic settlement."

The criticisms of the 1919 Labor Party Conference on the treaty were embodied in two resolutions.<sup>1</sup> Ramsay MacDonald moved the one which demanded the inclusion of Germany in the League and the immediate revision by the League "of the harsh provisions of the Treaty, which are inconsistent with the statements made on behalf of the Allied Governments when the Armistice was made." The other resolution, moved by Mrs. Snowden, censured the treaty for its failure to provide "either for the restoration of industry throughout Europe with equality of fiscal treat-

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 19th Annual Conference*, pp. 217 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 139-143.



ment, or for any adequate international control of raw materials." The resolution, it will be noted, was based on the principles of Sections IV and V of the Memorandum on War Aims. The Conference passed both resolutions.

The Treaty of Versailles was presented to Parliament as the Treaty of Peace Bill. The main debate occurred on the Second Reading, on July 21st, 1919. Clynes, speaking for the Labor Party, objected to the exclusion of Germany from the League of Nations and the denial of self-determination to those portions of the German people alienated from Germany. He hoped that the Allies would apply the doctrine of disarmament to themselves as they had imposed it on Germany. He, however, agreed with General Smuts that it was better to accept the Treaty, defective though it was. "Our view is that with all its defects, with all its blemishes, it is the work of men who, in the circumstances which surrounded it, must have acted with motives of the highest patriotism and with the highest and noblest considerations for human government."<sup>1</sup>

Compared with the mildness of Clynes' criticism, the speeches of some of the non-laborites stand almost as a contrast. Sir Donald MacLean thought that reparations should be fixed.<sup>2</sup> Lt.-Colonel Murray objected to the Shantung clauses of the Treaty.<sup>3</sup> Commander Kenworthy delivered a severe attack on the onerous conditions imposed on Germany. All the German colonies were alienated. Three-quarters of her coal and one-third of her iron were taken from Germany. She was allowed no agents or banks in foreign countries and no foreign security. She had to pay five billion pounds on account and further sums to be determined. All these, he said, would condemn genera-

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th series, vol. 118, pp. 958-965.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 951-958.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1018-1025.

tions of the German people to economic slavery. The League of Nations was also attacked by him. Only four representatives of forty small nations were in the Council; both the Council and the Assembly were made instruments of the governments, not of peoples or parliaments; enemy nations were excluded. He agreed that the Shantung clauses violated the principle of self-determination.<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of the 1920 parliamentary session, Adamson referred to the treaty of peace with Germany as being of "such an onerous character that there is little hope of its being carried out." He hoped that in framing the treaties with Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey the whole international situation might be reviewed in order to create in them better guarantees of an enduring peace.<sup>2</sup> The whole settlement of the World War was reviewed in a resolution moved by G. Thorne (non-laborite), which deplored "that your Majesty's Ministers have not recognized the impracticability of the fulfilment by our late enemies of many of the terms of the Peace Treaties nor shown an adequate appreciation of the grave dangers to our economic position at home and abroad by the continuance of the delay in the restoration of settled conditions in many parts of Europe and the Near East." The resolution was defeated by 600 ayes to 254 noes; of the sixty ayes, the Labor Party contributed thirty-nine.<sup>3</sup>

The treaties with Austria and Bulgaria were presented to Parliament for ratification in April, 1920. Lt.-Colonel Malone (non-laborite) moved their rejection. He pointed out that the Bulgarian treaty was defective in that: (a) Macedonia, with one million Bulgarians, should have been

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 118, pp. 1028-1036.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 125, pp. 17 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 265 *et seq.*

given autonomy but was divided between Greece and Jugo-Slavia; (b) Thrace, with a Bulgar population, was given to Greece; (c) the ports of Kavala and Dedeagatch, vital to Bulgaria, were left unsettled, and (d) Dobruja was given to Roumania without a plebiscite. The Austrian treaty was defective, according to Malone, in that: (a) it imposed an indeterminate indemnity on German Austria alone; (b) the reparations included live stock which was necessary to the existence of the population; (c) Vienna was cut off from industrial resources, the control of which was to be transferred to the Czechs; (d) Bohemia, Moravia, and Austrian Silesia, with large German elements, were taken away from Austria without a plebiscite, and (e) Tyrol, largely German in population, was given to Italy.<sup>1</sup> J. C. Wedgwood, on behalf of the Labor Party, seconded the motion and emphasized, in the case of the Austrian treaty, the indemnity, the deprivation of industrial resources, and the annexation of Tyrol by Italy, and in the case of the Bulgarian treaty, the indemnity, the transfer of Tsaribrod to Jugo-Slavia, the transfer of Thrace to Greece, and the denial of Dedeagatch to Bulgaria.<sup>2</sup> The motion was defeated by a vote of 34 ayes and 188 noes, the Labor Party contributing thirty-two of the ayes.

By the summer of 1920, when the Labor Party and the Trades Union Congress held their annual meetings, all the treaties of peace had been either ratified or, at least, as in the case of the Treaty of Sèvres, framed. The sentiment in both bodies in regard to the settlement of the World War was one of great disappointment. W. H. Hutchinson (Amalgamated Society of Engineers) voiced, in his presidential address at the Labor Party Conference, undoubtedly

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 127, pp. 1716-1727.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1727-1734.

the general opinion of the Labor Party when he stated, "Each successive Peace Treaty, and almost every decision of the Supreme Council, has been conceived in a spirit of imperialism and national aggrandisement utterly inconsistent with the professed aims with which the country waged war, and the policy which is being pursued has already abundantly revealed its consequences in the outbreak of new wars and fresh disputes between nations."<sup>1</sup> T. Shaw, who opposed the recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee for the holding of an International Labor and Socialist Conference to define the terms of peace in the 1916 Trades Union Congress, moved at the 1920 Labor Party Conference a resolution which, among other things, characterized the peace treaties as having violated the declared war aims and the terms of the Armistice, and demanded their revision. The resolution also advocated international organization of foodstuffs and raw materials and equitable distribution of them to remedy the economic and social chaos in Central Europe, and condemned the White Terror in Hungary and the blockade of Russia.<sup>2</sup> This resolution was passed by the Conference. The Party issued in the summer a manifesto on the economic situation in Europe, advocating three forms of action: politically, modification of the rigidity of the new frontiers by a common economic code; financially, international loans to rehabilitate credit; and industrially, international apportionment of raw materials, particularly of coal, in order to revive industry.<sup>3</sup>

At the Trades Union Congress, a similar spirit prevailed in regard to the peace settlement. J. H. Thomas, as president of the Congress, said that the disappointment of labor

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 20th Annual Conference*, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203.

was all the greater because the treaties were an utter denial of the declared war aims of the Allied governments. He thought that the only hope of Europe was that statesmen should interpret the Treaty of Versailles in a spirit different from that in which it was framed. He urged the Conference not to permit the bitterness of suffering to blind it "to the teaching of history through all the ages, that the germs of future wars are sown in Peace Treaties made in a spirit of revenge."<sup>1</sup>

One word may be inserted on the attitude of British labor towards the Allied treatment of Soviet Russia. From the beginning of the revolution in March, 1917, British labor has been sympathetic towards the new regime. When the Bolsheviki came into power, British labor, though remaining indifferent or hostile to Bolsheviki ideas, claimed for Russia complete freedom in its internal affairs. In 1919, the withdrawal of British troops from Russia was one of the two principal objects entrusted to the newly created Council of Action. In the war between Poland and Russia, it asked that the British government not only should not aid Poland but as a member of the League of Nations should influence the League to stop the Polish offensive.

The conclusions to be drawn from this study of the opinion and action of British labor in regard to the World War and its settlement are implicit in the record. All that will be attempted in this summary is to state them in a more related way. The British Labor Party was united in opposition to the war up to the day when Great Britain declared war on Germany; it was divided into a majority and a minority wing from that day to the late summer of 1917; it was re-united from then to the present time. The majority and the minority wings of the Party differed as to the

<sup>1</sup> *Report of 52nd Congress*, pp. 61-62.

causes of the war, as to the comparative merits of a negotiated peace and a victorious peace, and finally as to the necessity of stating concretely the war aims of and by the government. The majority wing believed, after the hostilities had been begun and not before, that the war was one between democracy and autocracy. The issue being clear-cut and simple and so weighted with meaning for the entire world, the war must be fought to a finish; in fact, autocracy could only be crushed, not negotiated out of existence. A military victory demanded unity and concentration of energy; all statements of war aims under such circumstances would be academic and positively detrimental by being distracting. To the minority, the issue was neither simple nor clear-cut. German autocracy was, at most, only one of several factors which brought about the war; among the other causes were the feverish struggle of empire indulged in by all of the world powers, among which Great Britain was not the least moderate, and the resultant diplomacy which divided Europe into two armed camps. This implied a certain distrust of the motives of the Allied governments, which led, on the one hand, to the contention that a negotiated peace was more likely to be just than a victorious or dictated peace, and, on the other, to the constant demand for concrete statements of war aims. Both the majority and minority wings were, therefore, logical in their own systems of thinking, if the premises were once accepted.

About the labor war aims as set forth in the Memorandum, several things are clear. In the first place, they were on the whole anti-imperialistic, contravening important parts of the peace program which the Allied governments had carefully and secretly prepared among themselves. Secondly, their unanimous acceptance by British labor leaders represented an intellectual victory for the minority wing of the Labor Party, for they were based on the minority prem-

ise. The change in the majority wing came not from a moral change but from disillusionment; for, as has been pointed out, the majority wing objected not so much to the war aims of the minority wing—although this factor was present, particularly in reference to Alsace-Lorraine—as to stating them at all. The publication of the secret treaties by the Soviet government, at a time of war weariness, was too much not to disillusion the majoritaires. Finally, the labor war aims were not realized, or realized only very partially, in the peace treaties; British labor leaders were among the first to point this out. The defeat of the labor war aims seems to indicate that the minority interpretation of the war was nearer to the facts of British and international politics than the majority interpretation.

Should any of this defeat be ascribed to the action of the majoritaires of the British Labor Party, and if so, how much of it? The responsibility of the majoritaires is not that of having supported or of having connived at the imperialistic aims of the Allied governments; for of these, the majoritaires knew nothing for a time, and when they knew, they did not fail to repudiate them. The responsibility of the majoritaires for the settlement of the World War is this: the frame of mind which assigned all the evil to one side of the struggle and all the good to the other was the fertile soil on which the imperialistic aims flourished; and that frame of mind the majoritaires did their utmost to inculcate in the people of Great Britain.

The record of the World War shows that outside of the labor ranks there were men who strove, with energy and ability equal to the labor minoritaires', for a non-imperialistic peace.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

THE foregoing study has naturally bifurcated into two sections. The first section, dealing with India, Africa, and Ireland, has been concerned with the problem of British relations with subject peoples. The second section, embracing pre-war diplomacy, tariff, armament, the peace movement, and the World War, has dealt with the problem of British relations with Britain's rivals in imperialism. The two sections, however, form one movement. Frequently, British annexations have been made mainly to prevent a particular region or strategic point from falling under the domination of an imperialist rival. Conversely, British relations with imperialistic rivals have been complicated by annexations. In operation, the two sets of problems have coalesced into a continuous chain of cause and effect.

The reaction of British labor to both sets of problems has been anti-imperialistic, both in intent and in effect, with one possible exception. Labor's ideals in the realm of colonial and foreign policy have been the ideals of the Victorian Little-Englanders. The relation between Victorian radicalism and labor's reaction to the general imperialistic movements has already been pointed out. The same, with similar qualifications, is true of labor's reaction to the other questions. To Cobden, Britain's conquest of India was always an iniquity; the sooner India was abandoned the better. To Bright, while abandonment seemed unwise, a greater delegation of power to India was both wise and



necessary. In regard to Ireland, both the outstanding leaders of Victorian radicalism were among the first to appreciate the gravity of the Irish question; both early demanded a reform of the land system in Ireland and the abolition of the Establishment. True, Cobden had no love for the Repeal cry of O'Connell, and Bright had no sympathy for the Home Rule agitation of Parnell; both failed to appreciate the nationalistic aspect of the Irish question. In this, labor followed another strain of Victorian radicalism, which combined the social and religious views of Cobden and Bright with an appreciation of Irish nationalism. Africa was not a question in the days of Cobden; but Bright and Morley opposed the occupation of Egypt, which was in a way the "egg" of Britain's empire in Africa, as Gladstone himself phrased it. The action of the labor *minoritaires* in the World War was identical with the action of Cobden and Bright in the Crimean War. Although the labor *majoritaires* in the World War forsook for a time the ideals of Little-Englandism, they united with the *minoritaires* in war aims and in criticism of the peace treaties.

This Victorian heritage has been shared by the earlier and the later leaders of British labor. Broadhurst, Burt, Fenwick, Alexander Macdonald, Cremer, and Maddison, among the earlier leaders of the period, and Burns, Hardie, Henderson, Clynes, Ramsay Macdonald, and Snowden, among the later leaders, all counted themselves as Little Englanders. The only difference is that as the younger leaders became more radical in social views they became also more radical in colonial and foreign policy.

While the quality of the reaction of British labor leaders to British imperialism has, with one exception, been anti-imperialistic, its varying quantity is problematical. Let us note the striking variations. In the sphere of Britain's relations with subject or politically weak countries, British

labor has paid more attention to Ireland than to India, more attention to the Boer Republics and Egypt than to other parts of Africa, and more attention to any of these questions than to the Far East. In the other sphere of Britain's relations with her rivals in imperialism, British labor has shown more interest in free trade and disarmament than in diplomacy; it hardly reacted at all to the Bosnian crisis and to the Bagdad Railway. Moreover, there is a difference between the Trades Union Congress and the Labor Party in Conference or in Parliament. The reaction of these two bodies to Britain's relations with Germany before the World War is characteristic: the Congress was active only in counteracting anti-German *sentiment* while the Party was fairly active in demanding a reversal of the anti-German *policy* of the government.

The quantity of labor's reaction to imperialism has been not only varying but slight, except in the cases of tariff and armament and in the *post-bellum* days.

These seeming inconsistencies have a natural explanation. Ireland is nearer to Great Britain than India; Irish life is more intimately associated with British life; the Irish struggle has been thrust more continuously and more vividly before the British public than the Indian struggle. The Far East is remote; British relations to that region have not been marked by a dramatic event in the last forty years; the problem has been one of diplomacy. British relations with the Boer Republics and with Egypt have been dramatized while British relations with other African peoples have produced no striking events. In the case of the latter, there have been the chartered companies, which were, as Cobden characterized the East Indian Company, "a screen between the British nation and a full sight of its awful responsibilities." The incidence of tariff and armament is more direct and more immediate than the incidence of a diplomatic policy.

Furthermore, the labor movement arose mainly out of domestic social questions. It has been occupied with the redress of social grievances. It is therefore natural that the movement before the World War reacted slightly to imperialism and that the Trades Union Congress, more closely related to the individual trade unions, should pay less attention to questions of foreign policy than the Labor Party.

Asquiescence in imperialism is different from desire to initiate such policies. Asquiescence comes mostly from indifference. From the anti-imperialistic point of view, indifference is a weakness when the Labor Party is in opposition, but it might be a strength if the Labor Party were in power. Labor has always conducted an agitation against war, but when war is declared, labor's patriotism is as noted as the patriotism of other citizens. If war could be stopped, one of the instruments of imperialism would be removed. But war is made by policy; unless a policy is checked, anti-war agitation is futile. And foreign policy has been controlled mainly by the executive branch of the government. With labor in office, the very absorption in social questions might have the negative effect of diverting the energy of the government from imperial expansion to social amelioration.

The one possible exception in the conclusion about labor's reaction to imperialism is the question of tariff. Labor's strict stand for free trade is anti-imperialistic in intent. Is it, it may be asked, always anti-imperialistic in effect? Undoubtedly, world economic life will be in the coming decades profoundly affected by the industrialization of such countries as India and China. Great Britain has the full control of Indian tariff and a partial control of Chinese tariff. Will the Labor Party use its power to impose, or help to impose, free trade on these countries? If the answer is to be based on labor's record in regard to Indian

tariff, it is an unqualified yes. Would this be truly anti-imperialistic? Both India and China believe that without a protective tariff their industries cannot be developed. They see in the imposition of free trade on them only a design to keep them in perpetual economic slavery to the industrialized nations. Both this fear of economic slavery and the denial of self-determination to them will help to breed in India and China a violent nationalism, the future effects of which no one can foretell. The Chinese and Indian belief in the necessity of a protective tariff may be unfounded. If so, the fact must be demonstrated. A more truly international policy would be to assist those countries to obtain such protection for such industries as a scientific investigation may find necessary.

Before this study is closed, a word must be said about the influence of the World War on the imperial and foreign policies of the Labor Party. It has been shown that it was under the influence of the World War that the Labor Party for the first time assumed the championship of the rights of the subject peoples in India, in Egypt, and in Ireland. In the sphere of foreign policies, the Party's earlier vague claims for a European fellowship in place of the balance of power has since the war crystallized into the definite policy of a world fellowship, starting with the League of Nations. The Party has asked that the organ of international government should assume a positive rôle in the regulation not only of international political relations but of international economic relations. Whether these policies are likely to succeed or not is conditioned upon many factors. In the colonial sphere, the fact that the habits of life and thought of whole classes in Great Britain have been formed in the regime of imperial rule over aliens, will tend to delay progress. In the sphere of foreign policy, the success will be influenced, even determined, by the action of the other

nations. The important fact to be noticed here is that the transformations in the Labor Party, wrought by the World War, are steps away from exclusive nationalism, which, in an aggressive form, leads to imperialism.

Are these transformations merely ephemeral? Will they die away as the memory of the World War grows dim? It is hardly to be expected that popular interest in imperial and foreign questions can be long kept at the same height as during the last few years. But it seems to us that the Labor Party will go forward with its program, first, because the program has historical roots; secondly, because the Party has known how to readapt its Victorian heritage to modern conditions, and finally, because it has drawn into its ranks not only the labor movement but all the leaders of anti-imperialism outside of labor and to-day stands as a major party, upholding the ideals of Little-Englandism.

## VITA

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TINGFU F. TSIANG was born in Shaoyang, Hunan, China, in 1895. He received his early education under private tutors. After the abolition of the old examination system, he was in a Chinese school for a year and in a missionary school for three years. Since coming to America, he attended Oberlin College, where he received the degree of B. A. in 1918. He pursued graduate studies in Columbia from the fall of 1919 to the winter of 1922. His training in research was gained mostly in a seminar conducted by Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes in British social politics since 1884.